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THE  
A M O U R S  
O F  
L A I S:  
OR K

The Misfortunes of Love.

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"I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought,  
"I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;  
"I view my crime, but kindle at the view,  
"Repent old pleasures, and solicit new."

Eloisa to Abelard.

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L O N D O N,

Printed for M. FOLINGSBY, in *Fleet-Street*; and  
J. WILKIE, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*.

MDCCLXVI.



THE  
 MEMOIRS  
 OF  
 ELIZABETH  
 OR  
 The Misfortunes of Love.

"I ought  
 to have  
 I view my  
 Repent old pleasures, and tell her now."  
 Hilda to Abigail.



LONDON,  
 Printed for M. Folingsey, in Pall-mall; and  
 J. Wilkie, in St. Paul's Church-yard.  
 MDCCLXXVI.

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## P R E F A C E.

**N**O one can be ignorant of this famous proverb : *Non licet omnibus adire Corinthum* : All are not permitted to go to Corinth. It owes its rise to the charms of our heroine ; to her the city was indebted for its renown. It seems, she was the only wonder worthy the observation of the strangers who visited that prime seat of pleasure : but she valued her favours at so high a rate, that the wealthiest merchants or senators could scarce pretend to them. Corinth was then unrivalled for pomp and festivity. Paris is now the very image of it ; and a French marquis at the toilette of a court lady, is an exact resemblance of a Corinthian senator in the dressing-room of a courtesan.

A 2 -

LAIS

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LAIS was the most celebrated of her sex; adored by the men, envied by the women, what addition could her glory receive? Her charms were fatal to all the sages of Greece. One single look from her overthrew the work of many years reflexion and austerity; and the philosophers seemed to fortify themselves with the utmost care against the effects of love, only to render the triumph of Laïs more conspicuous. In short, the wisest of them were transported at the sight of her beauty; acknowledged the power of her charms to be unrivalled; and thought themselves honoured by being permitted to pay those adorations her transcendent merits claimed.

DEMOSTHENES came from Athens to Corinth, to offer her his homages. Diogenes the Cynic quitted his tub, to prostrate himself before her; and was fortunate enough to imbibe in his heart the fire that consumed



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consumed him. Aristippus saw her, and ceased to be wife.

XENOCRATES alone was proof against her allurements. She spared neither labour nor artifice to defeat his austere philosophy. She made advances; and sought him even in the dust of his school. Was he blind? Did he turn his eyes from her? I know not. But, if we believe what historians say about it, he was insensible.

No other person ever saw Laïs without returning full of love, and communicating the report of her excellences to all those they conversed with concerning her; so that two beautiful eyes enflamed all Greece with a fire, whose cinders we would not now relumine, but to demonstrate its dangerous power.

MAY all who read this work, find in it a preservative, with which it is difficult to

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fortify ourselves, against the seducing tongues and enchanting talents of our Syrens. It is not impossible for us to be proof against their attacks, if we suffer them to make no more than a slight impression on our senses (which is indeed a tribute of nature), and then recall them immediately from their surprise, by hearing Reason in its turn, which the example of all ages ought to render both eloquent and persuasive.

It may be objected to our History, that the adventures recorded in it have the appearance of Romance; but we must beg leave to remind our readers of the heroism of the times in which *Lais* flourished.— And is it so incredible a matter that young noblemen should not hesitate to venture their lives for an amiable mistress, when the present age furnishes us with instances so numerous of an equally-ridiculous magnanimity in the meanest mechanics? Doth not daily

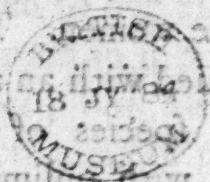
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daily experience convince us of the numberless animosities, a female smile is capable of producing? And why then should we scruple to give credit to the facts which History has handed down to us of the foibles of antiquity?

CORINTH was unquestionably, at the period which we are about to describe, the very centre of voluptuousness and excess. The character of a fribble was the utmost ambition of the men; and that of a courtesan the glory of the women. Theatrical diversions were pursued with an ardour inexpressible; and no species of effeminacy but reigned there with unlimited sway. Let the reader, therefore, who peruses the following sheets, make allowance for the imperfections of nature and education; and rather commiserate the distresses of Laïs, than condemn her for follies which fashion had rendered commendable.



IN a word, if we have described her as she really was, we have avoided even the least appearance of indelicacy; and have endeavoured to serve the cause of virtue, by representing the fatal consequences of the least deviation from it. Such, therefore, as the following memoirs are, they are submitted to the candour of the public, and of the fair sex in particular, who, we hope, will not fail to avoid the quicksands on which the unhappily-beautiful Laïs so miserably split.



THE

THE  
AMOURS  
OF  
LAIS.

**L**AIS was born at Hyccarra, a town in Sicily. She was but eight years of age, when Nicias, the Athenian general, ravaged the place of her nativity. Her parents abandoned their town, to prevent being buried in those ruins, which the mischances of war seemed so evidently to  
B threaten.

threaten. Young Laïs, now the most precious of all their treasures, was taken with them; who, by the vivacity of her wit, and the numberless charms with which Nature had adorned her person, abundantly compensated the care bestowed on her education. They settled at Corinth, resolving to live there in tranquillity upon the fortune they had acquired by commerce, and to divide their days betwixt pleasure and the tuition of their daughter. Laïs listened to their instructions with singular attention; and frequently anticipated them. Her happy parents enjoyed the satisfaction of perceiving in the mind of their child those very sciences they wished her to possess. Nature herself had there plentifully sowed the seeds, and nurtured them with the warmth of a most lively and brilliant imagination.

THE accomplishments of her mind and person seemed to vie with each other in the



the rapidity of their increase. Her gently-rising bosom, her animated eyes sparkling with celestial fire, her captivating smile, her cheeks decked with the most agreeable mixture of the lily and the rose; in short, an inexpressible variety of pleasing graces; conspired already in proclaiming Laïs the master-piece of Nature. Art likewise contributed her share of embellishments; and the self-love of Laïs added, to the simple beauties of nature, every the most refined ornament that a modest coquetry could possibly suggest.

FORMED to inspire the tenderest sensations of love, she herself was inflexible to its allurements. If every conquest afforded new matter of exultation, it was, however, embittered by the dread of being herself captivated. Her eyes served only to enchant mankind; those talents which render men amiable being beyond her discernment. She looked upon love to be a

weakness unworthy of the cause that produced it, a weakness men alone deserved to feel; and thought it but reasonable, that beauty should be accustomed to hear the sighs of others, without being itself affected.

WHILST the charms of Laïs attracted the admiration of the Corinthians, the fame of her beauty presently spread through all Greece, and soon distinguished her by the title of The Wonder of Corinth. Strangers came from all parts to offer their homage; but she treated them with the coldest indifference, or indeed with little better than contempt. Her house was the theatre where they assembled to admire her; and she might reckon as many lovers as spectators. In private, she valued herself on this croud of flatterers, whose importunities she publicly affected to despise. The only sentiment she at that time felt was vanity; a foible too natural in the softer sex! Those to whom Nature has been most

most unkind imagine themselves to be tolerable; the middle rank of beauties see no rival: what then might Lais think, who was an exact semblance of Venns? what ideas might not she conceive of her own perfections, when they were to every other person the object either of adoration or of envy?

SHE readily allowed that friendship deserved some return; but thought adoration was above that law; and did not conceive that men, who humbled themselves so much to her, were worthy of a favourable regard. She therefore resolved to love nothing in a world which did not seem to deserve the honour of possessing her. She even extended her indifference to hatred, and her pride to contempt. All the presents that were continually offered she rejected with disdain, as so many injuries to that beauty, whose smiles were not to be purchased by trifles so contemptible. The motive which



guided her conduct was entirely misapprehended; and her virtue was admired, when her haughtiness deserved detestation. But men are easily deceived; and the art of deception is natural to women.

ONE day, fatigued with the homages that were lavished on her, she stole from the croud of her adorers, to enjoy for a moment the pleasures of solitude. The heavens were serene; and the earth seemed desirous of emulating the beauties of their spangled canopy. I cannot tell what instinct, or rather what wayward destiny, directed her steps towards the borders of the sea. She wandered long on the shore, sometimes diverting her eyes by the prospect of the tranquil waves, which served as a mirror to the lustre of the skies; sometimes with pleasing horror admiring the rocks which Nature held suspended over her head. At last, she sat down at the foot of one of the rocks, and began to meditate.

Love

Love was the subject of her reflexions: it was the first that presented itself; doubtless, to announce her approaching misfortune. She was highly offended with herself, and endeavoured to check the thought; but Cupid only laughed at a passion he was soon going to be revenged of. Laïs was ruminating on the most sublime moral: "What weakness is it to love!" said she. "It is excusable in men: they have in themselves nothing amiable; and a thousand enchanting objects appear perpetually before their eyes. But can women possibly forget themselves so far as to divide the very sentiments they excite, and adore those beings from whom their sex justly challenges adoration? Indeed, I am unacquainted with the nature of women; but if they were all like me, they would pay no attention to the flattery of men; they would receive no homages from them, unless it were through the view of exposing with impunity their favourite

“vices. Is it not ridiculous to sue for chains  
 “from the hands of men, who are at the  
 “height of their wishes when we vouch-  
 “safe to prescribe them laws? For my  
 “own part, I will take care to deviate from  
 “the common track: I will enjoy that ex-  
 “quisite pleasure of tormenting men by  
 “my severity; and be content with posses-  
 “sing the power of making them happy,  
 “without ever giving myself the trouble  
 “of exerting it.”

SUCH were the reflexions of Laïs. I spare the reader at least half: possibly they might not be to his taste. But what can reason do when opposed to sentiment? We are going to see, or rather to be convinced, that it can do nothing.

WHILE Laïs so haughtily insulted the chains of lovers and the laws of love; from the bottom of the cavern, which was in the innermost part of the rock at the foot  
 of



of which she sat, she heard some plaintive accents; she lent an ear, and distinguished, amidst sighs innumerable, the exclamations of “ Oh, unhappy father! — Still more unhappy son! — Cruel step-mother!”

THESE lamentations, heightened by the melodious sadness of the voice which uttered them, pierced the heart of Laïs. Pity, though against her will, insinuated itself into her soul; she became, for the first time, experimentally sensible of the sweetness of tears, when drawn by sympathy. Happy, if compassion had not awakened in her breast the dormant flame of love!

SHE still attended to the sound, which thus proceeded: “ No! I cannot survive my “ misfortunes! — Dear shadow of my father, I haste to join thee! — Receive an “ unhappy son, who prefers death to the “ wretchedness of living a fatal witness to “ thy dishonour!”

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IMMEDIATELY she saw a youth come out of the cavern, who ran with fury to plunge himself into the sea. She held him by his cloaths. He turned, and knew her. For some time, he remained speechless. But the eloquence imparted to his eyes by tears was inexpressible. "Is it you, adorable "Lais!" exclaimed he: "Is it you, that "condescend to extricate an unfortunate "man from despair?—Alas! if I was not "to take away my own life, grief would "soon deprive me of it!—But a single "look from you would recall my raptured "soul, though fluttering on the hazardous "verge of eternity!"

AT these words, he threw himself at the feet of Lais, who recollected him to be Sosthenes, son of a rich merchant at Corinth, who had been particularly connected with her parents. She raised him with tenderness; and having made him set down  
by

by her, insisted on knowing the cause of his despair.

“THE source of my tears,” returned he, “would be inexhaustible, if it was not the hand of Lais that condescends to dry them up. You desire me to discover it to you. Your desires are laws. But, for heaven’s sake, permit me to recollect myself a moment. — How, Lais! Can it possibly be you that I see? Can you, who have rejected with contempt the adoration of the greatest princes in Greece, vouchsafe to commiserate the pangs of the unhappy? What shall I say? I see tears trickling from your eyes!

“Alas! ought I to complain of weeping, when you are so deeply affected? — Surely not! — Abandon to his despair a wretched man, who seeks no other favour in this world than a permission to quit it for ever. Leave me to my grief, and to



“that death which awaits me. To what  
“purpose is it to trouble you with my  
“misfortunes? Ought you to be acquaint-  
“ed with misery? or am I worthy to draw  
“tears from those beauteous eyes, which  
“warm so many hearts?

“HAPPINESS and joy are made for you.  
“Leave sadness to those whom fate pur-  
“sues. I know the greatness of your soul;  
“and my misfortunes are so numerous, it  
“would be impossible for you to hear the  
“recital of them without being a partaker.  
“What! shall I be the mortal destined to  
“make you acquainted with sorrow? Alas!  
“that would be encreasing my woes. Op-  
“pose no longer my design. Suffer me to  
“immerge with me in the waves the secret  
“of my misfortunes.”

A DISCOURSE so foreign to the purport  
of her question served only to encrease the  
curiosity of Laïs. She pressed him to ac-  
quaint

quaint her unreservedly with every particular. Her intreaties were ineffectual: but she commanded, and was obeyed.

“ You see,” pursued he, “ these cordages,  
“ these planks, this rudder; sad witnesses  
“ of that wreck the impetuous waves have  
“ occasioned! These are the objects I can-  
“ not behold without sprinkling them with  
“ my tears! These are the remains of my  
“ father’s ship!

“ He departed about a year since for  
“ Troy, whither his commercial business  
“ called him. In his absence, my mother  
“ contracted an intimacy with a senator of  
“ Corinth, the continuance and various in-  
“ trigues of which excited my suspicions. I  
“ examined matters more accurately; and  
“ was but too well convinced of the fatal  
“ certainty I sought with trembling. I ven-  
“ tured to mention slightly something of the  
“ affair to my mother, and respect moderat-  
“ ed

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"ed my first remonstrances; but, finding  
 "them useless, I no longer kept measures  
 "with her. I recalled to her mind the  
 "duty, the sanctity, of the conjugal faith;  
 "and delineated her crime in all its horrors.  
 "I strove to make her sensible of the re-  
 "morse that follows it, and of the punish-  
 "ments announced by celestial vengeance  
 "against such offenders. But was it possi-  
 "ble my persuasions could prevail, when  
 "the dread of all the woes I threatened  
 "her with, and twenty years of a constant  
 "and approved virtue, were insufficient to  
 "preserve her? What could I say to her,  
 "that her conscience had not a thousand  
 "times repeated?

"My reproofs were looked upon as mu-  
 "tiny; and she soon sought means to get  
 "quit of an importunate witness, who would  
 "have thought himself an associate in her  
 "crime, if he had seen it without reproach-  
 "ing her with the guilt. The means of  
 "accom-



“accomplishing her design were not diffi-  
 “cult. As hatred is never at a loss for  
 “pretences, she soon found several; and,  
 “by the assistance of her paramour the  
 “senator, I was disinherited.

“I took refuge at the house of a friend  
 “of my father’s. This merchant, either  
 “through humanity or motives of interest,  
 “entertained me with the greatest tender-  
 “ness. He, doubtless, expected my father  
 “would repay the obligation at his return  
 “but even this confidence was an heroic  
 “effort for a man of his disposition.

“I WAITED for a paternal hand to dry  
 “up the tears which the rigour of an un-  
 “natural mother had caused me; or at  
 “least I hoped to soften their bitterness,  
 “by shedding them in the bosom of the  
 “best of fathers. My vows, the only ob-  
 “lation of the wretched, were daily offered  
 “to Heaven for his return. Frantic with  
 “impatience,

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"impatience, no day has passed without my  
 "viewing this shore. From the top of this  
 "rock, I with eagerness examined every  
 "sail that approached the port of Corinth.  
 "Each vessel suggested to the eagerness  
 "of my imagination the appearance of my  
 "father's. My heart flew to meet him;  
 "but the constant fruit of my eagerness  
 "and disquiet was only the cruel advantage  
 "of being undeceived.

"TORN by the agonies of suspense, I  
 scarce was able to support the burthen.  
 "At length, yesterday towards the evening,  
 "I perceived a ship at a distance, whose  
 "sails were bent for Corinth. The wind  
 "began to rise; its violence suddenly in-  
 "creased to a height so furious, that in an  
 "instant the vessel was dashed against these  
 "rocks with an impetuosity which shattered  
 "it to pieces. The cries of the unhappy  
 "awakened my attention, and inspired me  
 "with courage. I threw myself with pre-  
 "cipi-

" cipation into the middle of the waves,  
 " which strenuously opposed my efforts. I  
 " stretched my hand to a wretched man,  
 " who had scarce strength left to keep his  
 " head above water, in whom the glimmer-  
 " ing of life was near extinguished. I took  
 " him in my arms, and brought him to the  
 " foot of this rock, where having stretched  
 " him on the sand — alas! — it was my fa-  
 " ther. — Pardon, thou loveliest of thy  
 " sex, the sorrow-fraught sighs that escape  
 " me, and the tears they draw from you! —  
 " Where is the flinty heart, that grieves like  
 " mine would not dissolve to pity? — I  
 " saw my father, scarce breathing, in my  
 " trembling arms; — and such a father —  
 " great Gods! — I warmed him on my  
 " breast; — he discovered still some signs  
 " of life; and, half opening his dying eye-  
 " lids, with faltering voice exclaimed, — Is  
 " it then my son? — I welcome death, since  
 " it is thy hand that closes my eyes; and  
 " I should yet be the happiest of men, if  
 " the



“ the heavens had permitted me to see thy  
 “ mother! — Return; comfort her; tell her,  
 “ that my last breath was an effort of love  
 “ for her, and tenderness for you. — Adieu,  
 “ my dear Sosthenes; I feel my soul ready  
 “ to escape. — Receive it, my son; — my  
 “ dear son! — He expired with these words  
 “ on his lips. — Figure to yourself my dis-  
 “ traction at this afflicting sight; I find my-  
 “ self unable to describe it. — The reco-  
 “ lection of the wretched scene overpowers  
 “ my scarce-animated spirits.

“ I PASSED the night in this cavern, to  
 “ deplore my misfortunes. I found them  
 “ insupportable; and was determined to  
 “ ease myself by death. — You prevented  
 “ me; you extorted from me the recital of  
 “ my calamities. — I do not regret the toil;  
 “ but my design is still the same. — In the  
 “ name of the Gods, Laïs, leave me; unless  
 “ you are determined to be a witness of my  
 “ death.”

“ AH!

“AH! why thus abandoned to despair?”  
said Laïs, quite astonished. “Your grief I  
“acknowledge to be just; but ought it to  
“deprive you of existence, or make you  
“renounce the good fortune that possibly  
“fate may have in reserve for you?”

“ALAS! what good fortune can it have  
“reserved for me?” replied Sosthenes, in a  
languishing voice, which indicated an abate-  
ment of his sorrows. “I am disinherited;  
“and the friends of my father, on the re-  
“port of his death, will withdraw the as-  
“sistance they have hitherto afforded me.  
“Which way soever I turn my eyes, I see  
“nothing but ignominy and want before  
“me, and no resource but in death.”

“You may still find relief in Corinth,”  
added Laïs. “I will not now explain my-  
“self; but, in short, I command you to live.  
On saying these words, she arose; and So-  
sthenes

sthenes pressed her hand so tenderly, that she perceived he was not yet more than half dead. She accompanied him to town; and quitted him to go to her home: but in what condition, none but those who have experienced the tender anxieties of a growing love can judge.

AND here let us admire the caprice of this heart-tormenting son of Cytherea. — Laïs had seen Sosthenes, in his greatest splendour, wantoning about her with all his trifling and inconstant airs, which are far more likely to gain conquests than a sorrowful and languishing deportment; in short, making the most of all the talents and charms with which Nature had endowed him, to gain one smile from Laïs. — Sosthenes, in this brilliant state, could not move her. Scarce would she condescend to look at him with indifference. — But Sosthenes in tears, without his wonted bloom, without ornaments, captivates her heart, at the very  
moment



moment she is planning an impregnable bulwark to shield it from the attacks of love.— Such is the connexion of sentiments, which alternately take place in our souls! Betwixt friendship and passion there is but one degree; and tears of compassion are easily converted to those of love. This whimsical Deity had a mind to convince Laïs that reflexions are feeble ramparts, whose existence he permits no longer than he thinks necessary to make his triumph more conspicuous. His soft chains at first appeared to her but as a flowery wreath; and as soon as her natural pride had ceased to murmur, she abandoned herself to those delightful transports, which hope and desire invariably excite. A charming expectancy opened itself to her eyes. Every circumstance seemed to presage her good fortune and that of her lover. She found, in the chimerical felicity that her imagination promised to Sosthenes, a pleasure the more lively as it was produced by herself. She  
attached

attached him to her more and more by her generosity; confident that he was securely bound by the indissoluble chains of Cupid. Thus Laïs indulged in visionary prospects, which her romantic wishes found no difficulty in realizing! But the capricious deluder of hearts only inspired her with these delightful sensations, that she might the more fatally feel the distracting rigours of his scourge, and fall from a chimerical happiness into anguish too fatally certain!

LAÏS was still ignorant whether Sosthenes, in the midst of the troubles in which she saw him, had discovered the sentiments of her soul; for decorum moderated her love. If honour did not entirely regulate her conduct, she was desirous of saving herself the confusion of an acknowledgment, which hurt her pride more than her virtue. She was unwilling to betray her passion by her actions.

SHE

SHE caused money to be conveyed to him in a private manner; and had an apartment provided for him, where his sorrows were in some measure heightened by an ignorance of the beneficent hand which secretly endeavoured to disperse them. She waited with impatience for his discovering the source of those bounties that attended him unsought, and for his testifying his acknowledgments; certain, that from that sentiment he must fall into another, more lively and more delicate, though, perhaps, less voluntary. In short, wearied with expectation, she anticipated what she sought, by ordering the person, who had the charge of providing for the necessities of Sothenes, to name his benefactress; but to seem to grant this confession to the fervency of his intreaties, and as a matter entirely against the consent of Laïs. She presently beheld him at her feet, sprinkling them with his tears, and declaring to her his love in terms



so passionate, as were sufficient to obviate all doubts of his sincerity. She at first affected haughtiness; and gave him to understand, she did not expect such an insult, in return for her many civilities. She would gladly have dispensed with these reproaches, but that it would have been a breach of female dignity. She accompanied them, however, with a voice so different from her words, that Sosthenes easily perceived they were not dictated by her heart. By degrees, the severity of Laïs became relaxed; and she even deigned to receive his vows with complacency; a thousand sighs, less equivocal than words, assured her of his passion. She soon became familiar; and some slight favours, which, to enhance their value, she artfully pretended to refuse, effectually attached Sosthenes to her. With eager lips, he pressed her charming hand: she made some efforts to draw it back; but the moment he quitted it, her resistance decreased, and her hand even vouchsafed to meet him.

SUCH was their situation, when a prince of Ionia saw Laïs, and loved her. He immediately demanded her of her father in marriage. Princes are usually strangers to refusals or delay. As soon as he saw her, he was captivated by her charms, and was determined to possess her. The portrait of this lover deserves delineation. We know the description which the cotemporaries of Æsop have left us of his hideous

C

person.

person. The prince of Ionia was *Æsop* himself risen from the shades, after having enriched his figure with some strokes that were before wanting to complete him a perfect monster. This prince might possess as much wit as *Æsop*; but wit alone has not the power of inspiring congenial sentiments in any but wits; and a fine train of verses never produces any vehement passion for their author. A lady, in like manner, need only examine the outward appearance of her lover; if that be to her mind, all other particulars will have a certainty of pleasing.

WHEN *Laïs* saw her intended spouse, she shuddered with horror, and was with difficulty preserved from swooning. Figure to yourself a little man, at most four feet high, a head preposterously large; hair, which, covering all his forehead, formed brows to his diminutive eyes; a nose! (this object revived *Laïs*, as she could not refrain from  
a fit



a fit of laughter when she perceived it); a mouth, which served for a communication between two long ears; a belly, which appeared to announce the arrival of its master; his legs of equal dimensions throughout. — Such was the monster that the father of Laïs had chosen for her husband. Her mother, whose sympathetic tenderness could never have consented to the unhappiness of an adored daughter, had paid the debt of nature: death had deprived the unfortunate Laïs of this succour. The promises of the prince bewitched the eyes of her father: the vain pleasure of being nearly allied to a rich and powerful man; his ambition, his avarice; the adverse fates of Laïs; all conspired to make him sign a fatal contract, the forerunner of his daughter's woes. He told her, she must be ready, in two days at farthest, to attend her princely spouse into Ionia; and endeavoured to convince her, that his pompous titles and immense riches would more than supply the deficiency of

personal perfections. In what a condition was Laïs, when her unrelenting father declared his cruel will! Her grief was too violent to admit relief from tears; and her reason too much impaired to allow even a conception of the misfortunes she endured! The name of Sosthenes, and repeated exclamations of fury, were the only words that proceeded from her mouth. At last, she resolved, whatever might be the consequence, to write to Sosthenes; and her trembling hand traced out with difficulty the following billet, dictated by the union of love and despair.

“ It is determined, my dear Sosthenes;  
“ we are totally undone. A barbarous fa-  
“ ther has abandoned me to the brutality  
“ of a monster. I have already given my  
“ heart to the only person I can esteem;  
“ but what means can be taken to insure  
“ him the possession of it? — I know not  
“ what measures I should pursue, to extri-  
“ cate

"cate us from this dilemma; — but am determined, I will rather die, than not be thine."

SOSTHENES had no sooner perused this epistle, than, transported with love and fury, he flew to Laïs. Happily the little deity, who guided his steps, took him under his protection. He entered her chamber undiscovered. "Is it true then, dearest Laïs," said he, "that I must lose you? An unjust and cruel parent breaks the bonds, which he himself had once approved! But no; he flatters himself in vain with the power of separating us. Let us oppose our love to his rage; and let us despair of nothing, since despair is the soul of our designs, and renders us superior to our fate."

TEARS overwhelmed the face of Laïs. Her lover was in too much distraction to weep. Rage, tenderness, grief, and indignation, alternately took possession of their



hearts, and vented themselves in reproaches and sighs.

THEIR complaints, however, were insufficient to disperse the storm that threatened them. It was reason, not grief, they should have called to their assistance. At length, this genial balm made its way, in spite of the numerous sentiments that opposed it. When they were tired with sighing, they had recourse to reasoning. Sosthenes could devise no other expedient than to alienate her from paternal authority as speedily as possible. Laïs had scarce prudence enough to reflect that she ought at least to have rejected the first proposition of a scheme like this. He repeated his intreaties; and thought at last his tears and despair had extorted from her that consent, which she yielded only to the suggestions of love and pleasure. The delusion, however, was too delightful to admit the least hesitation.

THEY

THEY adjusted their plan of operations. Laïs, towards the middle of the night, went out at a private door, and met Sosthenes under the porch of the temple of Venus. This place was the usual rendezvous of lovers: here they offered up their vows to the goddess. The dread of being pursued shortened their prayers; and Laïs followed her lover to a strange house in the suburbs of Corinth, where they lived some time in the bosom of love and of distress. Sosthenes, disinherited, found no succour. Laïs had none to expect: she was, nevertheless, insensible to the rigours of penury, though bred in the midst of abundance. Though she had been accustomed to behold fortune and pleasures rising with emulation before her; you would have judged, to see her so perfectly resigned to her situation, that poverty had been habitual to her from her earliest years.

LOVE had taken possession of every faculty of her soul; and occupied them so entirely, as to leave her no leisure to bestow a thought on her unhappiness. Can one be sensible of pain or chagrin in the arms of the person one loves? Laïs herself admired her own conduct in adversity. "How powerful is love!" said she. "How much was I to blame in rebelling against a sovereign, who exercises his dominion only by conferring benefits. He has even extended his clemency so far as to overlook my blasphemy; or, if he has punished me for it, by increasing my sensibility, he has at the same time added a double relish to my joys!"

SUCH are the natural sentiments which love inspires, whilst in its meridian fervour; The cabin that Laïs shared with Sosthenes was in her eyes more beautiful than the most magnificent palace. If Olympus had opened



opened itself to her view, it could not have attracted a single smile; she would not have desired to enter there, but under the conduct of her adored Sosthenes; whom she would with pleasure have attended even to the shades. What charms did a mutual affection bestow on the moments of these happy lovers! The repasts that Laïs prepared, notwithstanding their simplicity, were worthy of being served at the temple of the gods; and their nectar had not the flavour and delicacy of a simple glass of water presented by the charming hand of the incomparable Laïs.

To please, to comfort each other, was their only study. Their reciprocal regard augmented daily, and added new degrees to their happiness; but the increase of their penury was as rapid as that of their love. Their trifling pittance was exhausted; and they were at the very point of expiring, through excess of love and hunger.

SOSTHENES, who imagined he had perceived some symptoms of indifference in the heart of his mistress, began to fear that necessity would tear her from his arms; or, at least, that she would reproach him with the misfortunes in which he had involved her. He went out one day, to try whether fortune, tired with persecuting them, might offer some assistance. He left Laïs immersed in the profoundest melancholy; which she knew not whether to attribute to the momentary absence of her lover or to the rigour of her situation. She was going to enter into reflexions, that might have operated powerfully in abating her attachment to Sosthenes, when she saw Euphemia approaching; who, hearing of the elopement of Laïs, had long sought for, and at last discovered, the place of her abode.

THIS Euphemia was one of those females, who know how to shake off what they

they call the prepossessions of virtue; and who, regardless of the aspersions their irregular conduct produces, enrich themselves by the aid of the graces and talents they receive from nature; content to repair, by a forced wisdom, the scandal of their libertinism, when the wrinkles of age have deprived them of the power of pleasing.

EUPHEMIA had one virtue remaining, amidst the vices that tarnished her heart; she was in the nicest degree susceptible of the charms of friendship. She had formerly had the strongest connexions with Laïs; had lamented her loss, and spared neither pains nor researches to find where she was, and to bring her some assistance. She was in the arms of one of her lovers, when she was informed where was the retreat, and what the situation, of Laïs. The rites of love were no impediment to the kind offices of friendship. These delightful passions are too nearly allied to be enemies to



each other. She flew to Laïs with a zeal the most affectionate. This unfortunate girl neither concealed from her the particulars of what had happened; nor the perplexities which at that time overwhelmed her heart. She described her love in its greatest excess; and requested Euphemia to assist her with advice, and to inform her what course she ought to resolve on.

EUPHEMIA, after a short deliberation, thus delivered her sentiments: "Indigence  
" is your portion, do you say, my dear Laïs?  
" Your courage, or rather your love, is  
" capable of surmounting its rigour. You  
" are so habituated to misery, that you are  
" not able to perceive how deeply you are  
" involved in it. I never can be convinced  
" that ebullitions of tenderness are sufficient  
" to preserve life in you. Pay less  
" attention to the dictates of a chimerical  
" confidence. Love may have the power  
" of destroying life, but is of itself insufficient.  
" cient.

“cient to support it. For my part, the on-  
“ly relief in my power to bestow is ad-  
“vice; it is often the best that friendship  
“can furnish. I will give you none, but  
“what I would take myself; was I exposed  
“to the like distress. I have formerly ex-  
“perienced it; and I followed the conduct  
“that I am now going to propose as a mo-  
“del for you.

“You still experience the transports of a  
“growing love, which describes to us its ob-  
“ject under the most flattering colours, and  
“is in appearance immoveable. It appears  
“to us every thing that is dear; it is every  
“thing that the universe contains most de-  
“lightful! We could with pleasure sacri-  
“fice our very being to it. We see nothing  
“but it in nature; we scarcely know whe-  
“ther there exists any thing else: It is the  
“only object at least that fixes our regards,  
“and our desires. Such is your present situ-  
“ation; such formerly was mine!

“BUT

“ BUT do you think this is a lasting state,  
“ and that your lover can always preserve  
“ the same charms in your eyes? Do not de-  
“ ceive yourself, my dear Laïs. You swear to  
“ Softhenes an eternal ardor, and incapable  
“ of changing, if not of increasing, and you  
“ swear in good faith. But mistrust your  
“ oaths; and rather give credit to what I am  
“ going to foretell. Your love is arrived at  
“ its last period, because it is so violent: you  
“ will feel it lessen daily; and soon there will  
“ only remain some small sparks, which can-  
“ not be revived, but by another object.  
“ Soon will you seek for perfections in your  
“ lover, of which he is not possessed, and  
“ you will find defects in him you never be-  
“ fore have perceived. The habitude of  
“ happiness will change into disgust, and  
“ will end in a coolness, little better than in-  
“ difference. Believe me, perpetual love is  
“ a chimera.

“ BUT



“ BUT when you are become insensible  
“ to the charms of love, you will not be so  
“ to the rigour of distress. The point of  
“ pleasure, smothered by long acquaintance,  
“ will become a spur to grief; and the mea-  
“ sure of voluptuousness, which used to in-  
“ toxicate you, will be that of bitterness,  
“ which indigence and disquiet will pour  
“ with contention into your heart. The  
“ two scourges of life are discontent and po-  
“ verty; the first has no longer hold of us  
“ than our indolence, or imprudence,  
“ suffers it; the other is an inevitable evil  
“ to the greatest part of mankind. It is in  
“ your power to free yourself from both;  
“ a favour that heaven does not grant to all  
“ mortals; but it exacts from you, in return  
“ for these benefactions, only the use you  
“ ought to make of them.

“ I AM going to teach you a moral that  
“ will soon shock you; you will blush more  
“ than

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“ than once in hearing my counfels. Some  
 “ remorse will forbid your following them;  
 “ but, in fhort, thefe are the maxims of indi-  
 “ gence and neceffity.

“ THE gods have given you fortune and  
 “ charms: your foolifh paffion, taking counfel  
 “ only from yourfelf, has deprived you of  
 “ the firft of thefe refources. Beauty alone  
 “ remains; you underftand me, and you  
 “ tremble. The life of a courtefan appears  
 “ to you the heighth of fcandal. I have as  
 “ much blufhed at it as you, before I em-  
 “ braced it; and nothing but my unhappy  
 “ fate, uniting all its rigors, could have  
 “ brought me to that refolve. But the firft  
 “ ftep fmothers remorse, and conducts us to a  
 “ career of pleasures diverfified to infinity,  
 “ which delights the foul without occupy-  
 “ ing it; and never afflicts our heart unlefs  
 “ it be to deliver it immediately to new  
 “ tranfports. Love is with us a caprice, not  
 “ a paffion; it changes its object each mo-  
 “ ment,

"ment, and often has many at a time. The  
"charm of protection and secrecy favours  
"our pleasures. We every day taste the  
"darling sweetness of committing an infide-  
"lity. It is true we only make use of re-  
"prisals; but what then! The fever of jea-  
"lousy enters not our hearts; and, far from  
"tearing our lovers from the arms of  
"others, we throw them there ourselves  
"with indifference. We have it in our  
"power to follow our inclinations, without  
"being slaves to them; we give them what  
"check we please; they fly, according to  
"our desires, from object to object; and do  
"not for that less enjoy the charms. In  
"short"—

"In short—terminate a discourse that  
"entirely destroys my patience," replies  
Lais, quite angry. "Is this then the only  
"remedy you can bring to my woes? Cruel  
"friend! When my heart is absorbed in the  
"bitterness of grief, you would poison it  
"with



“with the deceitful charms of vice. Abandon me for ever, if you can afford me no other assistance.”

“By this discourse,” replies Euphemia, “I am rather convinced of your love for Sosthenes, than of your virtue; but, my dear Laïs, if I could preserve you from necessity and the shame of vice, do you think that my friendship would not be before-hand with your desires? Alas! the enormous expences I have run into, the debts with which I am oppressed, will not permit me to alter your situation; but that you may be convinced of my friendship, I will share with you the little my imprudence has left me.”

“I am sensible of your friendship,” replied Laïs; “the only favour I desire of you is, that you will never speak to me more, and not afford that assistance to my unhappy  
“happy

“ happy fate, which would force me to follow your detestable advice.”

“ I forgive you these reproaches,” replied Euphemia, in quitting her; “ they are the effects of a mixture of love, remorse, and virtue, which predominates still in your heart: I hope that soon their voice, overpowered by a just sense of your misery, will leave my exhortations their full force. Adieu!”

SHE went out; and let fall, as she departed, some pieces of money, which Laiis at first looked upon with contempt, but at last gathered up with some regret. Sosthenes returned presently after; but brought home nothing but despair and misery. The money that Euphemia left helped them to subsist some days, which were passed in regretting their hard fate, not in their formerly-pleasing conversations of love.

THE

THE prediction of Euphemia, however, began to be verified. Laïs was herself surprised at the excessive disgust, which changed all her flame into coolness. She then experienced that love cannot always remain the same; that it must every instant either increase or diminish; and that, as soon as it has ejected all its fire, it leaves, in the heart that possessed it, a hideous vacuum of indifference or disquiet. She then recalled to her mind the counsels of Euphemia, and reflected on them; an infallible mark that it would not be long before she followed them. Vice is always sure to get the upper hand, when once we come to hesitate betwixt it and virtue.

EUPHEMIA returned to the cabin of Laïs, and found her alone. She received her with more friendship than before. The artful conversation of Euphemia soon gained the confidence of Laïs, who could not conceal



ceal from her the real situation of her heart.

It was then the dexterous courtesan profited of the weakness of her friend, and began to display the advantages of her profession. She spoke with so much fire and vivacity, as did not leave Laïs time to reflect within herself. She was soon persuaded. "Well," says she blushing, "Pardon me if I seemed to tremble to be of your profession. Your counsels have at last overcome me. I consent to seek some rich lover, to extricate me from this horrible situation; but excuse me still a glimmering of virtue I cannot extinguish, and would willingly preserve for ever. I consent, because my sad destiny will have it so, to bear the name of a courtesan; but I will not assume their manners; my modesty shall have only cause to blush at the report of what invenomed calumny will spread of my conduct, and not at my conduct itself.

" To

“To see my sweet-hearts, talk to them, con-  
“descend to hear them, receive their pre-  
“sents; these are the only favours I pre-  
“tend to grant them.”

SOSTHENES had heard this discourse, which his indignation was a thousand times near interrupting. At last, he quitted the place where he was concealed. A terrible look was the indication which announced to Laïs the reproaches with which he was going to load her.

“PERFIDIOUS wretch!” said he, “you  
“have such friends as this! You can with-  
“out trembling hear these shocking coun-  
“cils. Your virtue, or rather your black  
“hypocrisy, had attached me to you: and I  
“gave up my heart to an ungrateful wo-  
“man, who will soon give hers to all the  
“universe. I committed the fault, and at  
“last I repent it. Go seek a multitude of  
“lovers, because I am not sufficient. I will  
“not

“ not envy their happiness; and the coldest  
“ contempt, and most profound oblivion,  
“ shall be the only sentiment that I will  
“ preserve for you. Adieu; follow a friend  
“ who is worthy of you; and avoid my pre-  
“ sence with as much care as I will fly those  
“ perfidious eyes that have deceived me.”  
He still looked at Laïs some time without  
speaking, that he might enjoy her confusi-  
on: and at last went out, proclaiming his  
anger by the most cruel and disdainful  
frowns.

HIS reproaches did not leave the least  
impression on the heart of Laïs. They nei-  
ther produced anger, nor grief; and the  
contempt of Sosthenes completed the work  
of Euphemia. They so much agitated the  
heart of Laïs, as to prevent the remorse,  
from which she could not have defended  
herself, at the sight of the step she was go-  
ing to take.— A melancholy proof of the  
depravity of human nature!

EUPHEMIA



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EUPHEMIA took her by the hand, and brought her from that obscure cabin where she had languished during four months in the arms of love. She led her to a public walk; assuring her, that before the end of the day, some glimmering of hopes would appear, to dissipate the clouds which disturbed the serenity of her mind. She explained herself no further; and left her friend in that walk where women disputed amongst themselves the price of beauty, and the regards of the public. But in what situation could Laïs now appear there? the haughty Laïs, who from a magnificent chariot formerly contemplated on a croud of adorers who surrounded her, each attracting to himself the minutest glance of her fair eyes. She is now sorrowful, in plain apparel, alone, to serve for triumph to moderate beauties surrounded with gallants, as they walked from arbor to arbor; and to remain a butt to the malignant smiles of her unworthy rivals, who rejoiced at her downfall. Ignominy  
is

is difficult for the lowest and most servile souls to bear. What bitterness must it spread in that of Laïs, whose characteristic was pride!

SHE blushed at her situation; and shame drew tears of rage from her eyes, which the shame of shedding stopped. She resolved soon to quit an employ so injurious to her pride; and the vexation she felt in seeing herself effaced by unworthy rivals made her wink at those disgusts, which are inseparable from the name of a courtesan; so that, to avoid ignominy, she plunged herself into the midst of ignominy itself. She had entered a private bower, to confirm her scarce-settled resolution, when she saw a man approach, whose cloaths displayed the magnificence of a prince or prime-minister. She took him for some nobleman propitious fortune had directed to her net; and thanked heaven before-hand for the capture she was going to make; but she

D

was

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was soon undeceived. The mistake, however, was not very fatal.

“Is it you, beautiful Laïs,” said he to her, with a familiar air, which surprized her, and would at another time have most violently incensed her, “is it you, whom heaven hath restored to the Corinthians? Alas! since you have disappeared, our sex has been plunged in a general consternation, whilst inferior beauties have exulted. But, thanks to the fates, the existence of their triumph was but temporary; and, how long soever your absence has appeared to us, your return will efface even the remembrance of all our former anxieties.”

AFTER this compliment, paid with the air of a cavalier, he examined the garments of Laïs with attention. She blushed; and, to make her more sensible of the extremity of her distress, he went on in the following manner:



manner: " But in what condition do I see  
 " you! It must be Laïs herself, to be recol-  
 " lected under these tattered vestments! —  
 " How different is this situation from that  
 " splendour which seemed inseparable from  
 " your person! — Nature and art seemed to  
 " reserve for you alone their most exquisite  
 " beauties; but, at present, your personal  
 " charms are your only ornaments. They  
 " surpass all others, I acknowledge; but is  
 " this miserable state becoming your per-  
 " fections? Pardon me, if I too curiously  
 " examine your present situation; you ap-  
 " pear to be abandoned to the most pitiable  
 " distresses of indigence? Is it then out of  
 " jealousy for a treasure which heaven  
 " would ravish from us, that it oppresses  
 " you with such misery? or would it be  
 " revenged for the homages you have de-  
 " prived it of? You are its image and its  
 " master-piece: may we not be permitted  
 " to adore you? Yes, charming Laïs, there  
 " are lords and princes, who would ask no

“ greater favour from you than an acceptance of their valuable gifts, and your consent to the happiness they offer you. It is not in my own name I speak; such felicity is not destined for me. I shall esteem myself too fortunate in being the instrument of procuring you the benefits that will be heaped upon you, if you will condescend to submit yourself to the propitious guidance of fortune; and if a prepossession, equally ridiculous and cruel, prove not an obstacle to the pains I shall take in serving you.”

THIS was making an honest acknowledgment of the most shameful profession. Laïs perceived what kind of person she had to deal with, and answered him accordingly. They both wore the mask; and the gloss they lent to each other's condition, and to their sentiments, prevented those blushes, which neither of them could otherwise have been able to avoid.

BASTILE

BASTILE is the name of this protector of afflicted beauties. He conducted Laïs to an apartment, the splendour of which dazzled both her eyes and heart. He quitted her, with a promise of giving her the next day a catalogue of lovers, from which she might select such as she thought most proper. She passed the night in possessing, in magnificent dreams, the splendour she was in reality going to enjoy. She in illusion conceived the appearance of habiliments, wherein gold and diamonds disputed the sumptuous preference. These flattering ideas soon drove Sosthenes from her remembrance, and with him that misery which was the only token he had left her. Even pride, to which she now had been so long estranged, returned to her in all its former majesty.

IN the morning, she was awakened by Bastile, who entered very cavalierly, with-



out giving notice of his arrival. He seated himself by the side of her bed; and, taking from his pocket a long scrole, "This, Laïs," said he, "is the catalogue I promised you yesterday: it would have been infinite, if I had inserted all that were desirous of having their names appear in it; I must have numbered to you the whole city. I have noticed only such as merit your attention; and have added to the name of each such epithets as will characterize them, and render you familiar to their particular foibles or perfections."

AFTER this introduction, he began his lecture as followeth: "ACHILLES is a general of the army, who devotes to his pleasures every moment of leisure that peace allows him. He has enriched himself by the enormous contributions he has levied on the provinces he has conquered, and by plundering indiscriminately our own towns and those of our enemies.

" Though

“ Though in all other respects avaricious,  
“ to his mistresses he is profuse, but brutal  
“ and passionate. A dissembled resistance  
“ passes with him for a determined refusal;  
“ and quitting his mistresses is the least re-  
“ venge he takes of them. Jealousy makes  
“ him the most suspicious of mankind, and  
“ plunges in destruction all those that dare  
“ to oppose him in his amours.” — This de-  
scription made Laïs tremble. Her reader  
perceived it; and passed on to an article  
less terrifying.

“ EUGENIUS is a young lord, who has just  
“ embraced the profession of a soldier; he  
“ is genteelly made, extravagant, gay, and  
“ amusing; he is the compleatest of our ca-  
“ valiers; he has lately inherited an im-  
“ mense fortune, and is already dissatisfied  
“ that he has not consumed it, and that he  
“ is not involved in a labyrinth of debt, to  
“ be upon a footing with other great noble-  
“ men. I advise you,” adds the secretary,

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“ to fix upon him. His ruin will not cost  
 “ you much time. I promise you, he will  
 “ have no objection to it; if, in displaying  
 “ your riches to the eyes of the public,  
 “ you are not ashamed to acknowledge him  
 “ to be the author. But if this lover does  
 “ not content you, I have still enough that  
 “ are entirely unexceptionable.”

“ LUCILIUS is a leading man in the senate.  
 “ At his first admittance into that august  
 “ assembly, his family was well known to the  
 “ world; his fortune was small, and not suf-  
 “ ficient to maintain his dignity: but a doz-  
 “ en law-suits, which he determined like a  
 “ man of prudence and one who understood  
 “ business well, made him the richest sena-  
 “ tor in Corinth. If he heaps presents upon  
 “ his mistresses, he makes them pay dearly  
 “ for it by the frequency of his visits; he  
 “ is certainly the most troublesome lover in  
 “ the world.

“ ALWAYS



“ ALWAYS shut up with the object of his  
“ love, he is afraid to be seen by the pub-  
“ lic; lest they should reproach him with  
“ his injustice, and possibly proceed from  
“ reproaches to chastisement.

“ CLEOFANES is a receiver of the public  
“ money. It would be unnecessary to in-  
“ form you he is rich; but to calculate how  
“ much he is worth would be impossible.  
“ At the age of sixty, he still affects the air  
“ of a cavalier; and thinks himself admired  
“ by every woman that sees him. His cha-  
“ racter is a composition of pride and stupa-  
“ dity: he affects being a choice spirit, and  
“ attempts to make verses. He used to en-  
“ tertain poets at his table; but since he has  
“ taken it into his head that they attributed  
“ his works to themselves, he has dismissed  
“ them. His verses serve for the amuse-  
“ ment of the town; and no one can read  
“ them without giving to each word the  
D 5 “ tribute

“tribute of a loud laugh. Indeed, Laïs, I  
“swear, this character will divert you; and  
“as we are on the subject, should think my  
“self to blame, was I to forget an anecdote  
“that will give you a perfect idea of all  
“animals of his species.

“ABOUT a month since, being informed  
“that the object of his passions had used  
“him ill, he applied to me to advise him  
“on whom he should settle his affections.  
“Emilia had just lost her lover on a similar  
“account. She with ambition courted the  
“conquest of this rich senator, whom she  
“had never seen, but with whose opulence  
“she was not unacquainted. She conjured  
“me to introduce her to him; and though I  
“expected no acknowledgment from her, I  
“consented to her intreaties, and gave the  
“two lovers a meeting at my own house.  
“Emilia, as a proof of her earnestness, took  
“care to be there first.

“CLEOFANES

“CLEOFANES gave notice of his approach by a running foot-man, and presently arrived himself. He entered with the air of a conqueror, and addressed her by a compliment in verse, at which I could scarce preserve my countenance, whilst he was haranguing the object of his tenderness.

“EMILIA viewed him accurately; and, without giving him time to put an end to his discourse, Alas! says she to me, this must certainly be Sofia! At that name, the Lord Cleofanes remained speechless, and as if he had been thunder-struck. He recovered himself soon; but it was only to make way for a passion, which he appeased by bestowing a look of indignation on Emilia; and immediately departed, muttering some words she did not understand, but which plainly appeared to be execrations, and making the floor



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“tremble under the weight of his cane,  
 “which with the most romantic fury he  
 “struck against it.

“As soon as he was gone, I wanted to  
 “know what the name of Sofia had in it so  
 “disagreeable to the ears of this nobleman?  
 “You see, says she, this lord Cleofanes, who  
 “surprises all Corinth by the splendour of  
 “his equipages, and seems to swim in the  
 “midst of abundance and plenty. He is no  
 “more than a metamorphose into a man of  
 “quality. His real name is Sofia; he was  
 “formerly valet to a prince who adored me,  
 “and whom I loved a little. I obtained for  
 “him, by the means of my lover, a little  
 “place in the finances, in return for some  
 “services he had done me. He assisted me  
 “in deceiving his master, who had intrusted  
 “him to watch over my conduct. Since  
 “that time, I never heard his name men-  
 “tioned. Fortune, no doubt, took him un-  
 “der her wings, and carried him to the pitch  
 “where

“ where you now see him placed. But be  
 “ assured that the valet Sofia and the lord  
 “ Cleofanes are one and the same individual.

“ ‘THIS, charming Laïs,’ adds Bastile,  
 “ this is the original of most of the rich men,  
 “ you see lolling in chariots they were for-  
 “ merly used to drive; deaf to the cries of  
 “ the unhappy whose blood they suck, and  
 “ usurping the rank of men of quality, by  
 “ having ruined their benefactors. But let  
 “ us finish our catalogue; I have another per-  
 “ sonage to introduce to your acquaintance.

“ PAMENES is a young priest of the tem-  
 “ ple of Jupiter, and is not the most incon-  
 “ siderable that may be proposed to you; he  
 “ is well made, gallant, and full of wit; his  
 “ only fault is, knowing too well his talents,  
 “ and abandoning himself to an insupport-  
 “ able vanity; but why should not we ex-  
 “ cuse a rich and extravagant man? Gold,  
 “ as well as love, dazzles us, and makes us  
 “ shut

“ shut our eyes to the defects of those to  
“ whom we are attached. Pamenès sur-  
“ passes in riches our most opulent citizens.  
“ The folly and bigotry of the people are  
“ to him an inexhaustible source of riches.  
“ He never makes a single grimace at the  
“ altar, without being better paid for it than  
“ he would have been for the most import-  
“ ant service rendered to the republic.

“ I MUST acknowledge, however,” conti-  
nues Bastile, “ his credit was in great danger  
“ of sinking a few days since; and the peo-  
“ ples eyes would have been opened, if that  
“ had been possible, in matters of religion.

“ A MERCHANT, whose simplicity was  
“ equal to his devotion, and who had some  
“ slight suspicion of his wife’s conduct when  
“ no other person in the world entertained  
“ the least doubt of her libertinism, gave to  
“ Pamenès the charge of her conduct, that  
“ he might induce her to return to the dic-

I

“ tates



“tates of virtue and of religion. The lessons of the young priest did not fail of their proper efficacy; they proceeded from the mouth of love itself.

“THE whole public conversation soon turned on that lady’s conversion; and one would have sworn that such a metamorphosis could not have been effected but by the assistance of Mercury’s wand. Lucinda is the name of this pattern of sanctity. From this period, she was seldom seen in public; or if by chance she condescended to appear, it was only that others might edify by her modesty. Her more than common appearance of virtue contributed, however, to preserve in the minds of the people some remembrance of her former irregularities. They ran in crowds to the temple to see her; and returned full of respect for her, and of veneration for the gods, who had wrought so miraculous a change. The good and  
“pious

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“ pious husband devoutly paid his adorations to heaven for the virtue of his wife;  
 “ not without the gratefullest remembrance  
 “ of the prudent counsels and disinterested  
 “ assistance of Pamenes.

“ I KNOW not what caprice of devotion  
 “ awakened him lately in the middle of the  
 “ night, and inspired him with the design of  
 “ going to the temple, notwithstanding the  
 “ excessive darkness of the night, to offer  
 “ up his vows to Jupiter. But, whatever  
 “ were the motive, it is certain that he went.  
 “ Scarce had he penetrated the holy wood,  
 “ when a woman, whom the want of light  
 “ prevented him from knowing, took him  
 “ by the hand, exclaiming, — Is it you, dear  
 “ Pamenes? — But, alas! whence springs  
 “ this seeming coldness; this unusual negligence of attendance? — The propitious  
 “ god of love guided hither my eager steps;  
 “ his torch conducted me through the midst  
 “ of darkness; yes, his flambeau gave me  
 “ light,

“ light, and led me to your much-loved em-  
“ braces. — But the fervency of my affec-  
“ tion gave me reason to expect from you  
“ a much tenderer return. — Alas! Pa-  
“ menes, this cruel delay is utterly inconsis-  
“ tent with the passion you to this very day  
“ have so strongly expressed for me; a pas-  
“ sion I too fondly thought to be more than  
“ pretended?

“ THEY walked, however, without seeing  
“ one another; and the religious husband,  
“ without opening his lips, suffered himself  
“ to be conducted by the gentle hand that  
“ led him. They were not long before they  
“ arrived at a grotto, wherein the studious  
“ refinements of art had with the most ex-  
“ quisite delicacy embellished the simpler  
“ ornaments of nature. A lamp, destined  
“ to illuminate the mysteries of love, spread  
“ a gloomy light around; highly favourable  
“ to the rites of that deity. But how great  
“ was their mutual surprize, when the hus-  
“ band



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“band and his holy spouse beheld each  
 “other: you will easily conceive both the  
 “confusion of the lady and the rage of her  
 “husband.

“THE idiot inconsiderately divulged his  
 “adventure, or rather his infamy; not in  
 “the least doubting but that the indigna-  
 “tion of the people would fall upon Pa-  
 “menes. But the populace were rendered  
 “incredulous, through an extravagant at-  
 “tachment to credulity itself. The horrid  
 “calumny, as it was termed, was very near  
 “costing the unfortunate accuser his life.  
 “The priest found not the least difficulty  
 “in exculpating himself. Superstition se-  
 “cured him from danger; and preserved  
 “to Pamenes both his office and reputation  
 “unblemished. To the discerning few,  
 “however, a circumstance of this nature  
 “could not but occasion a copious field for  
 “speculation. But the blind bigotry of the  
 “populace overbalanced all reflexions.

“THESE,

“THESE, Laïs, are the lovers, who sue  
“for the honour of being your slaves. De-  
“lay not to make others happy, and to  
“be so yourself. Determine as speedily  
“as possible; the eclaireissement I have  
“given you will be a sufficient guide. I  
“leave you some days to consider of a final  
“resolve; after which I shall exert my most  
“strenuous endeavours in the completion  
“of your desires.”

“ONE single difficulty impedes me,” re-  
plied Laïs in an haughty tone, “and pro-  
“bably will set aside all the projects you  
“form for me. You, perhaps, imagine me  
“to be a courtesan; but you are mistaken:  
“I will have the name only: my reputa-  
“tion shall be the sacrifice I make to ne-  
“cessity; but I will preserve my virtue in-  
“violate. Treat this virtue as the result  
“of pride; call it even an idle prepossession;  
“but these are my real principles, to  
“which

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“ which I will ever adhere. My lovers  
 “ shall have the liberty of seeing me, and  
 “ of hearing me. I will listen to all their  
 “ sighs; and will answer them by expres-  
 “ sions of love, either real or counterfeit.  
 “ But these are the only favours I can pre-  
 “ vail upon myself to grant them.”

“ SAY no more about that,” replied the  
 gallant Bastile, with an air of the highest  
 satisfaction. “ Let your virtue no longer  
 “ be alarmed! The pleasure of seeing you,  
 “ of adoring you, will satisfy your lovers;  
 “ and your condescending to accept of their  
 “ presents will place them on the summit  
 “ of felicity. Such a return, it is true,  
 “ would not be sufficient from an inferior  
 “ beauty; but heaven has secured your  
 “ virtue, by forming you so particularly  
 “ excellent.”

BASTILE left Laïs, who passed several  
 days in those tranquil pleasures, which  
 opulence



opulence procures to those who for the first time taste such sweets. But it was her destiny to be not insensible to the power of love, at the time she enflamed the hearts of all that saw her. She was undoubtedly the most beautiful of women; but this masterpiece of nature would not have been perfect, had she not been equally susceptible of love and of caprice.

CHANCE placed her one fine evening at the end of a gallery, which overlooked the port of Corinth; here she enjoyed the serenity of the air, and amused herself with contemplating on the strange variety of personages whom the desire of gain had collected together in the port.

A YOUNG man, superbly dressed, whose natural charms far exceeded those which art had lavished on him, stopped some time to look at her: but what looks! how inexpressibly eloquent! they made Laïs instantaneously

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taneously sensible of all that they meant to express; their allurements penetrated her heart. She perceived it; and the slight efforts she made to suppress the sentiments involuntarily rising in her soul served only to assist their growth.

THIS beautiful young man re-passed several times under the gallery in which she stood. Each glance of his eyes was an inflamed dart, which filled the heart of Laïs with a fire the most ardent, and seemingly the most durable. What sweet desires and rapturous thoughts the sight of him excited in her very soul! This growing love had nothing in it but what was both charming and flattering. It was not a fire sometimes violent and sometimes weak, appearing by fits only, like the love which reigns in the hearts of those who are accustomed to its redoubled attacks. With Laïs, it had all the charms of novelty. It possessed that tranquillity and imaginary sweetness, which  
very

very naturally flow from innocence, and which, by their simplicity, are characteristic of the first impressions of sensibility an ingenuous mind receives.

THE eyes of Laïs were tenderly fixed on this young Corinthian, when an elderly man, whose features were the perfect representation of deformity, took him by the arm with an air of severity, and forcibly dragged him away. Laïs conceived for this man a hatred which she thought eternal; but which she afterwards found it necessary to surmount. Whilst her looks followed the lovely youth he had taken from her, whom she recalled by a thousand tender sighs, her eyes, sparkling with anger, met with horror this spectre so jealous of their pleasures. She would willingly have changed their power of inspiring love for that of inflicting death; and her revenge would have been as prompt as the offence itself.

SHE



SHE retired, full of rage and tenderness, her soul violently agitated by the extremes of love and despair; she was indeed herself ignorant whether the regard she entertained for the one exceeded her detestation for the other. When hatred is the effect of love, its transports are as violently affecting as those of love itself.

ALL that an amorous imagination has in it most flattering and languishing divided the heart of Laïs, till the happy moment that brought a second time before her eyes her amiable Corinthian. This was at a sight of a combat of animals, where he happened to be seated behind her. Every time she looked back, their eyes encountered each other. How many pretty speeches were thus made, without either of them being in the least sensible of the other's having perceived it!

WHEN

WHEN the shew began, the wild beasts were let loose, and flew upon each other with amazing fury. The circle resounded with the applauses bestowed on the courage of these unfortunate victims of the public amusement; but the spectators narrowly escaped paying dearly for the cruel and unnatural pleasures they purchased by the blood of the animals.

A LION, inflamed with rage, made his way through the limits which confined them, and threw himself into the midst of the assembly. The company instantly dispersed, rending the air with the most lamentable cries. The fright of Laïs prevented her quitting the seat, where she remained almost fainting and insensible. The lion ran hastily towards her, and was preparing to devour her, when she saw her generous lover make a rampart of his body. He drew his sword; and, with courage in-

E

spired

spired by love, plunged it to the hilt in the heart of the rapacious animal, who expired in streams of blood.

CLEOFILES (that is the name of this intrepid lover) turned round to Laïs, and offered her the assistance of his hand: "Con-  
" descend," said he, " to accept the services  
" of one who esteems himself the happiest  
" of men, in having had an opportunity of  
" exposing his life for you. Yes, my hap-  
" piness is beyond all I could desire. I  
" would willingly have shed the last drop  
" of my blood, to shew you how eagerly I  
" flew to the assistance of a life so precious.  
" Heaven has permitted me to survive your  
" danger, and has given me the good for-  
" tune of delivering you from it. Alas!  
" my felicity is at present so great, that I  
" dare not ask the recompence of a service,  
" which is to me the source of the sweetest  
" pleasures. But a soul like yours will ne-  
" ver rest satisfied with simple acknowledg-  
" ments.



“ments. Suffer me then to complete my  
 “work, and conduct you to your habitation,  
 “that I may procure for you all the assist-  
 “ance so terrible a surprize requires; hap-  
 “py if you deign to think favourably of  
 “the labours I chearfully bestow.”

AFTER this speech, to which Laïs answered by some interrupted accents, occasioned not only by the fright, which made her still tremble, but also by sighs less equivocal; Cleofiles took her by the hand, and conducted her home. She ordered all her domestics to retire; scenes of love requiring no spectators. A tender declaration ensued, which the eyes of both parties had already made a thousand times. She did not receive it with severity. The conversation now grew warm; and Cleofiles soon became sensible of her passion. He threw himself at the feet of the enchanting Laïs; he embraced her hands, and watered them with those soft tears, which have no other source

than the genuine sentiments of happiness.  
“ Ah! Laïs,” said he, “ dear Laïs! — you  
“ love me! — Yes, I ought to expire with the  
“ soft passion, since you condescend to be  
“ affected by my sighs! — But nothing can  
“ exceed my tenderness, unless it is your  
“ beauty, which surpasses all conception! —  
“ You are the most amiable of your sex,  
“ and of consequence the most adored! —  
“ Death only can put a period to the fer-  
“ vency of my affections, and deprive you  
“ of my homages! — But may you always  
“ retain some remembrance of the tenderest  
“ of lovers! — Laïs ——”

RECOVERED from his transports, he with  
tears acquainted her, that time, cruel in its  
rapidity, recalled him to his father’s house.  
Before she would consent to his departure,  
she insisted on his informing her who the  
brutal man was, that tore him from her  
sight a few days before. “ Alas!” said he,  
“ it is a tyrant, who poisons all my pleasures;  
“ it

" it is my tutor. My father, who ren-  
 " ders me a victim to this man's system of  
 " education, makes my juvenile years most  
 " uncomfortable. Under the guidance of  
 " this odious master, though at the age of  
 " nineteen, neither my liberty nor time are  
 " at my own disposal, but at the pleasure  
 " of this detested tyrant. With difficulty  
 " can I steal a moment to adore your per-  
 " fections; but that single moment will  
 " richly compensate for those anxious hours  
 " I languish under the inspection of my se-  
 " vere preceptor."

AFTER this answer, which was accom-  
 panied with a feeling sigh, he took his leave,  
 promising her to return the next day at the  
 same hour.

How tedious did this necessary absence  
 appear to Laïs! how cruel was the slow-  
 ness with which the lazy foot of time crept  
 on! The recollection of the pleasures she



had already enjoyed in his conversation, and the imagination of those she was speedily to enjoy, mutually distracted the heart of Laïs; convincing her that the impatience with which one sighs for an expected happiness is as bitter as despair itself.

CLEOFILES at last arrived. He threw himself at the feet of Laïs, who flew into his arms. What tender looks! what love-fraught sighs! what warm embraces! It is amazing that lovers do not frequently expire in these enchanting transports. Laïs and her lover would willingly have sacrificed their happiest days to so delightful a death. Cleofiles pressed Laïs affectionately to his breast, and was declaring to her the excess of passion which agitated his soul, when they discerned a man dressed in black, with a grim countenance, his eyes sparkling with anger. This was no other than the tutor of Cleofiles. How severe was the distress of Laïs at this juncture! Her delicacy

cacy experienced the most mortifying confusion in the very bosom of happiness itself. She shrieked, trembled, and turned pale; shame and anguish so tormented her that she was near fainting. She discovered, however, in the pedant's countenance, a greater appearance of love than fury. He reprimanded his amiable pupil, and treated him with all the opprobrious epithets he could invent to depreciate his pleasures; but, at the same time, his eager looks devoured the charms of Laïs, and plainly declared that love was the real cause of his anger. In short, having taken Cleofiles from the arms of Laïs and sent him to another chamber, he approached Laïs, and changing both his countenance and voice, "Recover yourself," said he, "from the fright I have unwillingly occasioned you. I do not come to tear from you a lover whom you admire; I come to throw another at your feet, less likely to please, but whose passion cannot be exceeded. The

“devoirs of a philosopher may not have  
“the charms you find in those of a cava-  
“lier; but that they are sincere, my sub-  
“mitting to avow them will sufficiently tes-  
“tify; since I have ever hitherto pretended  
“to esteem love as a weakness unworthy  
“of man, and to raise myself above hu-  
“manity itself. The sight of you puts my  
“reason to flight; and, when at your feet,  
“I am insensible to every sensation but  
“those of love.” At these words, the phi-  
losopher attempted to ravish a kiss from  
her hand. Hatred and love inspired her  
with courage; and she was very near tear-  
ing out his eyes. The pedant attempted a  
second time to steal a kiss; but soon felt  
upon his cheek the weight of the charming  
hand he wanted to embrace.

THEN re-assuming his pedantic tone,  
“Well, Laïs,” said he, “since love cannot  
“influence you in my favour, possibly my  
“threats, if immediately followed by their  
“effects,



“ effects, may prove more prevalent. You  
“ love Cleofiles; and he is ruined, unless  
“ you subdue that hatred which animates  
“ against me.

“ His father has intrusted to me the  
“ care of his education; and I govern the  
“ father still more than the son. When I  
“ inform him of his son’s passion for you,  
“ he will certainly keep him close confined,  
“ till the rigour of his punishment shall  
“ have vanquished his love, and erased the  
“ remembrance of your charms. If, on the  
“ contrary, you can love me, or at least pre-  
“ tend to do so, and lend an ear to my  
“ sighs, you shall have the sight of your  
“ lover as often as you desire. I will contrive  
“ interviews for you; and will do for my  
“ rival all that I would have done for my-  
“ self. It will, doubtless, be mortifying;  
“ but I will submit to it, if you will deign  
“ to listen to my passion, and encourage it  
“ by some appearance of tenderness; and

“ will permit me to snatch from your balmy  
“ lips some of those delightful kisses you so  
“ readily grant to Cleofiles.

“ CONSIDER of it, Laïs; and venture not  
“ to irritate my love; it will turn into anger,  
“ and will find in my rival a defenceless  
“ victim, on whom my whole revenge will  
“ fall. Consult well your heart; your de-  
“ termination will convince me whether  
“ your love to Cleofiles is greater than your  
“ hatred to me.”

IN how terrible a situation was the heart  
of Laïs! She must either betray Cleofiles,  
or expose him to the cruel resentment of  
a rival. Rage, grief, hatred, love, and de-  
spair, alternately distracted her. Love,  
however, prevailed, and soothed the con-  
flicting passions by which she was torment-  
ed. “ Well, cruel man!” said she, “ tell  
“ me on what conditions I may preserve my  
“ love: what do you expect from me?”

“ I HAVE

"I HAVE already told you," replied the  
 pedant: "that you permit me to come daily  
 "to adore you; that you do not seem of-  
 "fended at my love; and that you even  
 "affect for me the same regard which con-  
 "stitutes the happiness of Cleofiles: in  
 "short, that you do for me every thing that  
 "love inspires you with for him. On these  
 "terms, I will assist you even in deceiving  
 "myself. I will force myself to believe  
 "that your disssembled tenderneſſes are the  
 "exprefſions of a real ſentiment. — Such,  
 "Laïs, is my weakneſs! I ingenuouſly ac-  
 "knowledge, I have endeavoured to ſubdue  
 "it by reaſon; but am now convinced that  
 "no period of life is free from the attacks  
 "of love, and that no reflexions of philo-  
 "ſophy can ſhield us from its venom."

LAÏS at length conſented to betray her  
 lover, in order to ſerve him; but how much  
 pain did this infidelity coſt her! Scarcely



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could the loss of the youth she so sincerely loved have been more mortifying! She was under the necessity of submitting to the caresses of a monster, in whom nature had wantonly united every thing that was deformed; but, if he had been the loveliest of men, she would have hated him. What more was necessary to make him completely a monster?

THE pedant kept his word; he procured a rendezvous, of which he first tasted the pleasures. Laïs was recompensed, in the arms of Cleofiles, for all the disgusts she endured in those of his master. The pupil, who was not so good a philosopher, had not an heart entirely inaccessible to the intrusions of jealousy, and could not without difficulty refrain from murmuring at the easy access his preceptor found with Laïs. She excused herself on account of the necessity there was to oblige him, and the dangerous consequences that might attend the

the least appearance of disrespect; and their quarrels were soon extinguished in the bosom of love.

SOME glimmerings of reason, however, cleared up the anxieties that predominated in the soul of Laïs. She sometimes reflected on herself and on her passion, and called to mind the short duration of her first love. She hoped too that the light of prudence, resuming its full strength, would soon dissipate the weak sparks of this new flame.

BUT in vain she reasoned; her affection for Cleofiles soon got the ascendancy, and offered all the charms of novelty. In vain her memory reproached her with having once loved Sosthenes; she accused him of infidelity, and could not conceive that any other than Cleofiles could ever have fixed her regards and her desires. He alone, in her eyes, had any merit. Every other person,

son, though possessed of all the beauties that nature and art could possibly bestow, was to her indifferent. So far from exciting her love, she could not easily have granted them her esteem.

YET, amidst the conflicts of love, she distinguished a passion more reasonable, or at least more flattering, which began to operate in her heart. This was the love of splendour and magnificence. When she saw the courtesans of Corinth vie with princesses, and fix the eyes of the public upon them by the pomp of their equipages and the richness of their apparel, she could not look at herself without blushing at the plainness of her dress. Modesty was to her an ignominy, when the glory of her rivals struck her sight. Tho' she was in a condition decent enough to keep company with the richest citizens, she looked upon the ornaments with which she was decorated but as the shameful livery of virtue and indigence. However, this passion got so far  
domi-



dominion in her heart, as to divide it between a lover she adored, who could give her nothing, and a rich one, that could raise her to the most brilliant station.

CLEOFILES was at last freed from this tyrant; and she was no longer obliged to preserve a complaisance for a monster, whom custom had not rendered less odious. But her ambition began to struggle with her love. She ardently wished to equal her rivals in magnificence, and even, if possible, to dazzle their eyes with superior splendour, and thus revenge herself for all the chagrins the light of their riches had caused her.

HER love on the other hand was dissatisfied, "How!" says she, "can I submit to live under the empire of any other than Cleofiles?—But after all, it is of my heart he is jealous, not of my dissembled tenderness, of which I might make parade to  
" some

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“some prince, or man of fortune. He has  
 “permitted the love of his governor, why  
 “should he not permit that of another? Is  
 “it not sufficient that I love him, and that I  
 “find pleasure with him only? What is it  
 “to him if I seek disquiet with another?”

SHE was occupied in the midst of these  
 reflexions, and balanced betwixt love and  
 ambition, when Bastile came to extricate her  
 from these difficulties. “Well,” said he,  
 “do you still fluctuate in this incertitude?  
 “when will you determine on one of the  
 “parties I proposed to you? I am come to  
 “know your resolution, and have brought  
 “the homages of one of the richest of lo-  
 “vers. Aristenes is the person who has  
 “ordered me to make you happy. He will  
 “soon explain himself far better than I can  
 “do, by presenting you with a purse of  
 “money. I dare assure you, that his love  
 “will make him profuse, and his wealth  
 “will be sufficient both for his prodigalities,  
 “and

“ and all your wants. Believe me, it is languishing to live in this uncertain situation, or it is rather not living at all, especially when it is in your power to raise yourself to the most brilliant state; and to attain it, nothing but your will is wanting. What! shall beauties scarce passable receive the homage of the richest lords, and excel their very lovers in magnificence? and shall Laïs, the wonder of Corinth, lingering in obscure simplicity, shall she have nothing but her beauty to dazzle the eyes of the public. Arise from this lethargy, this indifference; and fly not from happiness when it seeks you.”

“ I AM ready to submit to your arguments,” replied Laïs. “ My inclination for grandeur gives them too much force; but recal to your mind my principles of virtue, and apprise the lover you bring me, of the integrity of my mind. Besides, I should be glad to know him; describe to  
“ me



“ me his temper, and his character; and do  
“ not expose me to all the vexations I must  
“ experience in him that is to rule over me,  
“ and whose manner of thinking and acting  
“ may not agree with mine.”

“ NOTHING can be more reasonable,” replied Bastile, “ and I will satisfy you.  
“ Aristenes is a nobleman of illustrious  
“ birth, well known, and still more esteem-  
“ ed for his riches. As I would describe  
“ him to you with one single stroke of a  
“ pencil, he is an idiot, and the more so be-  
“ cause he thinks himself wise and learned.  
“ Our philosophers have introduced them-  
“ selves to him, and have carried to his  
“ table their half-starved sciences. There,  
“ they give him lessons of morality, and  
“ above all of continence; while they them-  
“ selves are intoxicating themselves at his  
“ expence. He hears them with so much  
“ the more admiration, as their discourses to  
“ him, as well as to all the world, are inex-  
“ plicable

“ plicable ænigmas. In short, the love of  
“ philosophy has furiously possessed his  
“ mind; he professes himself of a sect of  
“ which he himself only knows the name,  
“ and opposes another he knows no better.  
“ He would pass for a man of the greatest  
“ wisdom, and a perfect master of his passi-  
“ ons and even over nature herself. In  
“ public, he affects indifference towards wo-  
“ men, which he carries even to hatred and  
“ contempt. Therefore, not to contradict  
“ his virtue, or at least his reputation, he is  
“ desirous his love should be kept a secret,  
“ and to have no other witnesses but himself  
“ and you: you will be well paid for your  
“ discretion. Who is the woman that would  
“ not suffer her tongue to be tied with two  
“ or three hundred talents? Besides, his vi-  
“ sits will not be troublesome to you; scarce  
“ can he steal away for a few hours, from  
“ the swarm of philosophers that beset him;  
“ and you will be at liberty to procure  
“ yourself a thousand pleasures at his ex-  
“ pence.

“pence, and to select to yourself a levee  
“of the most amiable young gentlemen in  
“Corinth. To deal plainly with you, he  
“has given me orders to conduct you im-  
“mediately to a most magnificent and well-  
“furnished mansion, where a train of do-  
“mestics, which he has taken the trouble  
“to choose himself, attend already, pre-  
“pared for your service.”

THIS account delighted Laïs; and the idea of the splendour and pleasures she was likely to enjoy stifled the murmurs of love. Bastile took her by the hand. A superb chariot, with four horses richly caparisoned; waited for them at the door.

“THERE is,” said Bastile, “the seat that  
“will serve you for a theatre, whenever  
“you think proper to grant the Corinthians  
“the happiness of adoring your charms.”  
They entertained themselves in their way  
thither with the advantages of a courtesan’s  
life.



life. Bastile described it to her in such animated colours, and raised her ideas of its advantages to so extravagant a pitch, that her approaching splendour already bewitched her sight.

At length, they arrived at the house, or rather the palace, which was destined for her reception. A prodigious number of servants attended at the door; a sight which awakened her pride and flattered her agreeably. She perceived, however, that the idiot, who was going to dispose of his liberty, had been artful enough to make choice of servants, whose aspect could not inspire her with the least inclination of committing an infidelity.

THE first step she made in these apartments procured her a flattering prospect, as all the riches whose lustre enchanted her were soon to be her own. Every the most costly embellishment that art, the minister

of indolence, could invent, was there seen in the greatest variety, all seeming formed to inspire pleasure; the air itself conveyed a balsamic fragrance to the breast that respired it. All the senses of Laïs were absorbed in excess of delight; and she would have been perfectly happy, had not perfect happiness been a blessing beyond the lot of humanity.

WERE we to follow the usual practice of historiographers, we should lead our readers into the minutest closet, and not suffer the most insignificant ornament to escape us undescribed; but we will spare them a detail, which would be as tedious to them as to ourselves, prolixity in these less important matters never failing to produce disgust. — To return, therefore, to our subject:

“THIS is,” said Bastile to Laïs, “your lover’s habitation. Pleasure and riches of all sorts will here court your acceptance.”

“ance. Here may you in tranquillity pass  
“your days; and, amidst your other felici-  
“ties, enjoy that exquisite one of making  
“others happy. You will have the satisf-  
“faction likewise of exciting the impotent  
“envy of your rivals. There is not one of  
“them, but would gladly purchase, at the  
“expence of half her life, the splendour  
“you enjoy. They have always beheld  
“this house with a wishful eye. No cour-  
“tesan has a palace, whose outside displays  
“such pomp, or whose interior embellish-  
“ments are more exactly suited to their  
“outward appearance. Cast your eyes on  
“this beautiful garden, where you may  
“find as much pleasure in amusing the  
“fight, as our senators enjoy in the tedious  
“sameness of their more extensive walks.  
“Behold these groves, these labyrinths, in  
“which are formed a thousand arbours,  
“each one resembling a temple of love.  
“Behold these spacious baths, these ponds,  
“these lofty terrasses, from whence the  
“fight



“ fight is extended over the whole town,  
“ and loses itself into the sea. Was there  
“ ever a more delicious situation? It is the  
“ finest that Corinth affords, and the only  
“ one that is worthy of you.”

BASTILE was eloquent when he talked to Laïs of her pleasures, or rather of the services he had rendered her. Never did painter represent a subject in a more pleasing light. Laïs was sensible that his expatiating thus on the care he had taken of her, was demanding a recompence. She offered him six talents, which he refused. “ My conduct surprizes you,” said he, “ as  
“ you think interest is the only principle on  
“ which people of my profession act. I  
“ acknowledge, it has ever been the first  
“ motive of my actions, when I transacted  
“ business for courtesans. I was too much  
“ familiarized to love; I saw it too near, to  
“ feel its attacks. Charming Laïs, I am not  
“ perfectly acquainted with your sentiments;  
“ but

“but from the first moment of my behold-  
“ing you, love alone has been my guide ;  
“it is he that has encouraged me to labour  
“for your prosperity ; it is he who is the  
“artificer of your good fortune ; it is he  
“that throws me at your feet, to ask my re-  
“ward. You have listened to the sighs of  
“a monster you detested ; will you reject  
“those of a man, whose services may supply  
“the defect of charms, if you found him  
“possessed of no other accomplishment.”

SHE evaded the subject, and answered the inflamed discourse of Bastile by some amorous expressions. Laïs was intoxicated with vanity and pleasure ; her joy prevented her from feeling the inconveniences of a love that had not yet touched her heart.

NEXT day, Aristenes came to see her, full of that self-sufficient and pedantic air which distinguishes a simpleton. He addressed her with a metaphysical compliment, of which

F

Laïs

Lais did not comprehend one single syllable. "Divine beauty," said he, "I lay at your feet a conquest, of which you ought to be proud. It is a philosopher, who till now doubted of every thing. Yes, I have demonstrated, by a thousand metaphysical arguments, that all things are uncertain, even to our very existence. But one look of yours over-sets all my demonstrations; and I am forced to acknowledge at your feet, that I exist, and even that I am happy. I am distracted with my felicity, it is true, though I forfeit my favourite opinions to gain it; but at last you force me to consent to my own happiness!"

AFTER this excellent address, which, without doubt, he had been long preparing before he ventured to speak it, he made a laboured panegyric on philosophy, and signified to her, that, if she was desirous of pleasing him, she must become a philosopher. He asked her if she knew the sect of Empiriches;



peryches; of which she ingenuously acknowledged her ignorance. Then he explained to her the opinion of these philosophers, and confused the little idea she had of them. She nevertheless complimented him on the clearness of his lessons; tho' she comprehended him no better than he did himself. All she could remember of it was, that we must doubt of all things, notwithstanding the acknowledgment he had made of his error at his first appearance. She confessed that, in effect, she doubted of every thing, except his love for her; and this exception did not displease him.

THUS passed the first conversation betwixt Laïs and Aristenes, whose love was lost in the most sublime metaphysics. But this god was not angry at it; he loves mysteries.

ARISTENES took his leave, saying he should not see her again in less than eight  
F 2 days,

days, because business called him out of Corinth; but that when he returned, his time should be divided betwixt her and philosophy. She seemed in despair when he mentioned his departure; and did not forget to shed some tears when he talked of his absence.

THAT very day she sent for Cleofiles. He came; and, to prevent all suspicion on account of her new situation (for Laïs knew him to be both jealous and imperious), she told him that one of her uncles was just dead, and had left her all the effects he saw her in possession of. He easily believed her. What may not one make a young man and a lover believe? He came several days following; and every moment they passed together was distinguished by some new degree of felicity. Sometimes they sought solitude in the groves; but what solitude! are we alone when we are with those we love? There they forgot the rest of the world,

world, being entirely secluded from it. — Sometimes wine exhilarated the tenderness of love, otherwise too uniform. How charming is a woman, when the fumes of wine occasion the fire of her eyes to sparkle, and put her reason to the flight! If she loses her reflexion, her heart and beauty remain. Is not this sufficient to enchant us? Delicious repasts, under arbours decorated by the Graces, were presented them by the hands of Cupids. What sighs! what tender looks! what sweet embraces! what interrupted discourses! “Alas!” said Laïs in these happy moments, “how could I formerly declare war against love? He has now ranked me under his banner to be revenged of me; how amiable is his vengeance!”

BUT how rapidly do the days blessed with happiness glide away! Why is not felicity eternal? or why are we not annihilated, when we cease to enjoy it?



THE eighth day was come, on which Laïs was to see the hideous Aristenes. Cleofiles, who came to her early in the morning, did not find the same gaiety in her eyes, especially when she looked at him. She sought some stratagem to discover to him the real cause, when one of her domestics whispered in her ear, that Aristenes was coming. She desired Cleofiles to retire; but he persisted in staying, and said he could not reconcile himself to leave her in the trouble he saw her, especially as she concealed from him the real cause of it.

AT last, the fear of losing either her lover or her fortune extorted from her the acknowledgment of her infidelity. She told him why she desired his absene. She really expected some reproaches; but hoped the frankness of her confession would not excite him to passion.

BUT

BUT she was mistaken ; for she was forced to bear the most cruel outrages. She remained silent ; but all she could do to justify herself, was to call to her lover's remembrance, that he had quietly enough submitted to the love of his governor.

“ YES, I suffered it through necessity. I  
“ was obliged to choose whether I would  
“ share your passion with him, or lose you  
“ for ever. But now, when, without necessity making it a duty, you receive other  
“ vows than mine, there can be no doubt  
“ but this choice proceeds from inclination ;  
“ and I despise your heart, because it does  
“ not give itself to me alone, without my  
“ sharing it with another. I do not in the least  
“ regret the pleasures I lose in you : I am  
“ only displeased that I have enjoyed them  
“ too much, and that I have given myself  
“ up to transports, which are to be paid at  
“ this infamous price. Adieu! you shall

“see me no more—but no—I stay—I will  
“see the rival that you prefer to me. You  
“shall behold him expiring by my hands;  
“or he shall give me the death I prepare  
“for him. Perhaps he may quench the  
“thirst you have for my blood. But, in  
“short, you will tremble to the end of the  
“combat; and I shall have the pleasure, in  
“dying, of having made you unhappy, if  
“kind heaven grant me no other revenge.”

AT that instant, the door half opened.  
Cleofiles drew his sword, and saw his father  
in his rival! His sword flew out of his hand;  
but his rage was not appeased. “What  
“do you do here?” said the father, with  
an irritated voice.—“What do you do here  
“yourself?” answered Cleofiles.—“I came  
“hither to punish you, rebel as you are;  
“and you, perfidious woman. Is this the  
“fidelity you swore to me.”—“What do  
“you complain of?” answered Laïs, coolly.  
—“Of what do I complain, ungrateful wo-  
“man?”



"man? of your perfidy. Is it not sufficiently manifest? can I doubt it?"—"You not only can," said Laïs, "but, what is more, you ought. Have you forgot, we ought to doubt of all things?" This argument stopped the philosopher's mouth, who departed with the mortal displeasure of having been in the wrong, though he was in the right.

AFTER having diverted herself with this pleasant scene, Laïs reflected on her present condition, which presented nothing to her but subjects of fear and disquiet. She lost two lovers, one of which constituted her felicity; the other would have made her fortune. How could she stay in a house whose magnificence she could not support when abroad? how should she maintain a numerous train of domestics?

BASTILE extricated her from her difficulties. He had heard her adventure at his

own house, and from Aristenes who went out. He foresaw the uneasiness of Laïs, and ran immediately to appease her. "I know your  
"adventure," said he, "but do not let it  
"fright you. We shall be more fortunate  
"another time. Remain still in this grand  
"house; it is the only habitation worthy of  
"you. It does not belong to Aristenes; he  
"only ordered me to procure it for you,  
"and to supply your expences. All is now  
"over; but some other will finish his work,  
"and soon a new lover will repair the loss  
"of this.—In vain fate seems to have de-  
"termined to render you unhappy in love;  
"you have two good sureties of an ap-  
"proaching felicity, your charms and my  
"address. Believe me, I am well versed in  
"intrigues; and I set so many engines to  
"work, that all cannot miss. I leave you,  
"and hope I have re-established your peace  
"of mind."

HE

HE was mistaken: he had well appeased the disquiet of Laïs in regard to her fortune; but he had not calmed that of her love. She adored Cleofiles, in spite of the unjust reproaches with which he had so loaded her. She dreaded the severity of his father. "Alas!" said she, "perhaps the unfortunate Cleofiles is already locked up in an obscure prison, abandoned to the most unworthy treatment; and it is I that have kindled this revengeful wrath, which is going to shower down upon him a thousand and a thousand hardships. Still if I was but the innocent cause of it! I was ignorant that he was the son of Aristenes; it is true; but in short, had it not been for my culpable infidelity, I should have still enjoyed his charming conversation, and he would have been partaker of my felicity. But perhaps he at present languishes in some dismal dungeon. Must I have at the same time both his and my own misfortunes to reproach myself with?"



HER fears were soon justified. She heard that the father of Cleofiles had caused him to be shut up in a house of confinement, where young debauchées are sentenced to the just hardships of a cruel servitude. She was distracted at this news; and could not without horror represent to herself the destiny of the unhappy Cleofiles. Sometimes she saw him, tortured with discontent, wish for death, as an end to his misfortunes. Sometimes she represented him to herself, expiring with misery and melancholy. But in whatever shape her love perceived him, she ever heard him reproach her with his misfortunes. Every moment she thought she heard his plaintive cries. She listened, and imagined she heard these words:

“MY days ought to be crowned with  
“pleasure; and misery is my only portion.  
“Cruel Laïs is the sole cause of my woe;  
“she punishes me, for having loved her too  
well.

“well. It was not enough for her to injure me with the blackest infidelity; but she must oppress me with misfortunes, and deprive me of my liberty, the only blessing that remains to the wretched.”

THESE reproaches were too shocking to a tender and passionate heart; she was desirous of seeing him. Love alone inspired her with the means. She long esteemed the design that passion dictated to her as the greatest weakness. But afterwards she said, “Shall I blush at the foibles of love? They are so many steps which raise us to perfect felicity.”

SHE knew that she could speak to Cleofiles; and that he was not so closely confined, but that she might have a tête à tête with him. She took women’s apparel, and those very plain, that she might not be known. She put on, underneath, men’s cloaths; and, under this habit of an hermaphrodite, she

110 THE AMOURS

she presented herself at the gate of the prison, whither her heart had already flown to her lover, and without fear, for love takes upon him all forms, upon occasion; when, if it does not brave danger, it is not sensible of it, which answers the same purpose.

THEY conducted Laïs to the apartment of Cleofiles, or rather to his dungeon, and left her alone with him. He looked at her some time without knowing her. She hardly knew herself; vexation had so much altered the features of her face.

“WHAT! is it you? cruel Laïs,” said he.  
 —“Yes, it is me, whom love brings here  
 “to serve you, and to teach you to know  
 “me. I come to break your chains, or partake of them. I have reproached myself for an involuntary crime; and I can  
 “neither bear, nor drive from my mind,  
 “the image of your misfortunes. Judge of  
 “my heart.”

“BUT



"BUT time presses; do not let us lose  
"it by superfluous discourse. Take these  
"women's cloaths, and throw them over  
"you as you can. I have for myself those  
"of men. Let us risk your flight under  
"this disguise. If this artifice does not  
"succeed, I shall think myself happy in  
"softening the rigor of your prison, by par-  
"taking of it with you."

CLEOFILUS threw himself at her feet,  
and watered them with his tears; but she  
raised him, saying, "Lose as little time as  
"possible, before you attempt your escape;  
"you will have leisure enough to testify  
"your acknowledgment and your love,  
"when we are at liberty."

SHE took him by the hand, and presently  
he was so disguised as not to be known;  
and from the pretiest of men, he became  
the ugliest of women. Laïs gave him her  
arm,

arm, and acted the cavalier. They got out of prison without being perceived, and traversed a long range of galleries, where the guards, placed at certain distances, diverted themselves, in their manner, at the beauty of the cavalier, and at the ugliness and awkward gait of the woman. In short, they were near the gate, and they arrived there without encountering any danger, when a confused cry of the guards, who called to one another, put them under terrible apprehensions. Cleofiles trembled for Laïs, and the tender Laïs was near fainting at the sight of the danger of Cleofiles. But they received no other inconvenience from it than the fright. The guard who kept the prison-door said, "One of our prisoners has just broke his irons; we fear lest he should make his escape; go out before I shut the door, for I cannot open it again for some time."

THEY

THEY did not want much intreating, and went out with all expedition. Two horses waited for them at the door, on which they mounted, and set spurs to them. Fear gave them wings, and they soon arrived at the house of Laïs, whose domestics were uneasy for the fate of their mistress; that is to say, to fear she would not return; for they already prepared to pilfer the most valuable of the furniture: without doubt, it was that they might have something to remember her. They lived several days together as real lovers, and found in their captivity all the charms they formerly had for one another. Love was the soul of their pleasures. He himself took care to diversify them, that he might the longer keep under his laws two hearts that were not to be much longer united.

In the mean time, Laïs heard that Aristenes was dead; that it was not known where



where his son lay concealed; and that his avaritious relations were on the point of dividing amongst them the inheritance that belonged to him.

SHE hastened to Cleofiles, and conducted him to the most retired part of the garden; where putting on a sorrowful countenance, which announced the melancholy tale she was about to repeat, "I am going," said she, "to strike to your heart a most afflicting blow, which will also, I fear, be a lasting one."—"Alas!" answered he, "this fear offends me! What blow from your hand can cause me grief? To expire by so sweet an instrument would remove the terrors of death. — Oh, speak, charming Laïs; and break a silence more terrifying than the bitterest words." — "I fear to speak," said she, "because my words will afflict you. I know your heart to be as susceptible to the impressions of nature as to those of love. But I am under the necessity

“necessity of disclosing to you the dismal  
“secret which will cost you tears; it con-  
“cerns you to know it. — Aristenes, your  
“father, is no more!” — Cleofiles answered,  
with great calmness, “He employed him-  
“self, during the whole course of his life,  
“in giving me cause not to regret him. I  
“wish he was still alive; but my grief is  
“not so great as to draw tears from my  
“eyes. His severities have stopped their  
“source; or if he has sometimes caused me  
“to shed any, they have been tears of rage,  
“rather than of tenderness.”

LAIS did not expect such an answer;  
and if she had foreseen it, would not have  
made such a great mystery of the news  
she had just told him. She saw the effects  
of the severity of those harsh parents, who  
look upon their children as their slaves, and  
thunder their malice and their cruelty upon  
these defenceless victims, who cannot escape  
them without exposing themselves to the ri-  
gour

gour of the laws, or to that of a harder fate than what they suffer in their paternal house. The insensibility of Cleofiles, nevertheless, inspired Laïs with some horror; but she threw it upon his father, whose severity had annihilated all sentiment in the heart of his son. If it is shocking to be inaccessible to the tender impressions of nature, it is still more so to efface them from those hearts in which they are engraven.

LAIS might have made better reflexions upon paternal duty; but the time that is spent with a lover is little fit for such meditations.

“CLEOFILES,” said she, “I do not blame  
 “you for giving so little attention to the  
 “voice of nature; that of love speaks to  
 “your heart, and that is enough for me.  
 “I consent to your forgetting a cruel fa-  
 “ther; but do not forget yourself. Think  
 “of



“of getting possession of the inheritance he  
“leaves you. You have an indisputable  
“right. Reason, nature, equity, all speak  
“for you. Already a croud of avaritious  
“relations devour with their eyes this bril-  
“liant succession. They are prepared to  
“seize it, and deprive you of your right.  
“Prevent them; go out of my house, and  
“surprise, by your presence, the world  
“from which you have disappeared. Dis-  
“perse all the false reports that have been  
“spread concerning your absence; make  
“yourself known, and enter into possession  
“of the fortune that your unworthy rela-  
“tions want to deprive you of.”

“Yes,” replied he with warmth, “this  
“succession inflames my desires; but it is  
“love that makes me wish for it. It is for  
“servile souls to see in riches nothing more  
“than their own felicity; but hearts ele-  
“vated by love have other sentiments.  
“Yes, Laïs, if I sigh after the inheritance  
“ of

“of my father, it is only to spread it at  
 “your feet. That is my only concern. I  
 “fly where you order me. I will return  
 “to my family, and dissipate all the con-  
 “trivances of my unjust relations, and will  
 “pay you the tribute of all I possess. What  
 “happy days are we going to enjoy! What  
 “a pleasure is it to complete the felicity  
 “of those we love! — Gods! — But I quit  
 “you, to hasten both your bliss and my  
 “own.”

CLEOFILES went directly to an intimate  
 of his father's, in whom he found all the  
 friendship he had sought in vain in the  
 heart of the inflexible Aristenes. This  
 friend promised to support him with all his  
 credit. He was as good as his word; and  
 Cleofiles soon appeared in the midst of a  
 crowd of uncles, nephews, and cousins, who  
 all had taken advantage of his being ab-  
 sent at the time of his father's death.

THEY

THEY were employed in sorting the papers they had found in the port-feuille of Aristenes. Strife and avarice had already excited open quarrels amongst them, which were put an end to by the appearance of Cleofiles. They turned pale; and had death himself visited them from the other world, with all the dismal appearance that accompanies the shades, they could not have been more terrified. Recovered from their surprize, they were however audacious enough to dispute with him an inheritance to which both nature and the laws intitled him. They made a pretence of his imprisonment and his flight; and concluded from thence that he had disinherited himself by his debauches. His conduct was submitted to the eyes of justice, and was found irreproachable. His unworthy relations were obliged to resign his estate to him. He returned triumphant to bring the happy  
news



news to Laïs. The triumph of her lover was her's also. Their joy was mutual.

"Yes, Laïs," said Cleofiles with transport, "I am the happiest of men, because  
 "I am now able to compleat your felicity.  
 "Possessed of immense riches, I shall make  
 "you partaker, and shall not dispose of  
 "them, but according to your wishes; and  
 "all that depends on me shall be to you  
 "the same as to myself. Reign for ever  
 "over my heart and all that belongs to me.  
 "Suffer a sacred and inviolable knot to seal  
 "our oaths, and to complete our felicity,  
 "by assuring you of my faith for ever.  
 "Let us unite our destinies by a bond which  
 "is above the vicissitudes of fortune, and  
 "over which the capriciousness of fate has  
 "not any power. — You seem to reject  
 "my proposal; what is there in it that of-  
 "fends you?"

"THERE

“THERE is in it what ought to be of-  
 “fensive to you,” returned Laïs; “learn  
 “to value yourself; it is your honour I  
 “defend, though contrary to both our in-  
 “clinations. It would be most desireable  
 “to me, to spend my days with you, and  
 “to be under your protection. Happy  
 “would it have been, if fate, which took so  
 “much care in the resemblance of our cha-  
 “racters, had also made a similitude in our  
 “conditions! I could wish it had raised me  
 “to your pitch; or, if I was not worthy of  
 “so noble a destiny, I wish (excuse the  
 “transports of my love) it had lowered  
 “yours to mine; and that we might, with-  
 “out dishonouring ourselves, you by too  
 “much weakness, I by too much pride,  
 “have united for ever those days that love  
 “himself blessed with so much pleasure  
 “in the arms of Hymen. But think of  
 “the infinite distance that separates us  
 “from one another. Cast an eye on my  
 G “birth;

“ birth; and see if you can disengage it  
“ from the obscurity with which it is sur-  
“ rounded. Look at yourself; and remem-  
“ ber who you are. Think of the blood  
“ you inherit from your ancestors. You are  
“ allied to the most principal families in  
“ Corinth. The joining of that illustrious  
“ name you bear with mine, would be flur-  
“ ring it with an indelible spot, and renounc-  
“ ing the most advantageous matches, to  
“ unite yourself to a Greek stranger.  
“ Soon the irritated murmurs of your fa-  
“ mily would disturb the quiet you expect  
“ under the laws of Hymen. They will  
“ reproach you of having sacrificed your  
“ honour to a foolish passion, and I shall  
“ become the object of their hatred; and,  
“ far from causing my felicity, you will en-  
“ venom my days, by exposing me to their  
“ reproaches and their malice. Believe  
“ me, there is no rage so inflexible as that  
“ of relations. They are deaf to reason  
“ and



“and intreaty; and have no consideration  
“for any person but their own dear selves.”

“YES, I understand your objections,”  
replied Cleofiles in an angry tone: “But  
“there is one you have not acknowledged  
“to me, which is the only one that operates  
“on your heart. You do not love me;  
“and, perhaps, never did.”

“AH! cruel Cleofiles,” again replied Laïs,  
“can you talk to me in this manner? The  
“refusal to which I have compelled my  
“heart, is the greatest effort my love can  
“be capable of. I have sacrificed to you  
“both my love and myself. I have con-  
“fented to lose you. But what do I say?  
“I will not lose you. Let us at the same  
“time preserve our love and your honour.  
“In this age, a woman of low extraction  
“dishonours a man of illustrious birth; but  
“a mistress, let her be what she will, dis-  
“honours none but herself.”

“ I SACRIFISE my reputation for the  
“ fake of your’s; yes, I consent to be your  
“ mistress all my life. Besides, believe me,  
“ this is the only means more strongly to  
“ insure to us each other’s affections. The  
“ torch of Hymen seldom fails to extinguish  
“ that of love. I am sensible, we sincerely  
“ swear never to live but for one another;  
“ but let us not flatter ourselves; how many,  
“ before their marriage, have made the  
“ same oaths and with as much sincerity,  
“ who nevertheless find together nothing  
“ but distaste and vexation, and who are a  
“ burden to each other! In short, I repeat  
“ it to you, I will love you all my life.  
“ Possibly my constancy might support the  
“ inevitable anxieties of marriage. But let  
“ us avoid a doubtful futurity. Let us be  
“ content with swearing an eternal affection,  
“ without dishonouring our oaths by a vain  
“ disguise of ceremony, which too often  
“ inspires us with the design of violating  
“ them.”

So

So many arguments at last persuaded Cleofiles. But, to assure to himself still more the possession of the heart of Lai's, he made her a present of half his fortune. He thought that, not having the pretext of necessity, she would not dare to betray him; and further, that gratitude would increase her love; but, alas! he was mistaken; these two sentiments can never correspond, one being a duty, the other a passion \*. Reason obliges us to gratitude; but who can tell the power that induces us to love? It is an impenetrable mystery even to the discerning eyes of the philosopher. None but those who feel the passion of love can be acquainted with it; and when we feel it, are we in a condition to know it, and does it not blind itself in blinding reason?

\* It was not without reason, therefore, that *Voltaire*, in his tragedy of *Zara*, says,

“ La reconnoissance est un foible retour,

“ Un tribut offensant trop peu fait pour l'amour.”

The prince of *French* poets was too well acquainted with nature not to be fully sensible of this truth.



LAÏS loved Cleofiles as long as she saw him unhappy, persecuted, depending on her bounty for every thing; her tenderness had then no bounds; and never was love so lively, so disinterested. But from the instant she in her turn became dependent on him, and that she owed her happiness and fortune to him, love vanished to make room for cold acknowledgments. These two sentiments are different, it is true; but why should they be enemies? Cannot they reign together in the same heart?

FROM the time that Laïs was obliged to Cleofiles for her fortune, she found her love diminish. His visits soon became troublesome. Anxiety slid into their conversation; which degenerated into cold compliments, and common-place chat still colder. Whenever Laïs saw her lover, she imagined he came to reproach her with his favours; and

and his visits, by force of importunities, became absolutely insupportable to her.

IN short, she in cool blood resolved to violate all the fine oaths she had made to him. Bastile procured her the acquaintance of Achilles, the general whom we have already described. He came to Laïs; and she had the good fortune to please him. But she had many perplexities to bear with this warrior. She twenty times was near falling asleep, at the recital of his exploits, with which he entertained her from morning till night. Love is charming under the habit of Mars; but no object is so ridiculous as Mars under the appearance of Love!

THOUGH Bastile was desirous that the intimacy betwixt Laïs and Achilles should always continue, he saw plainly that, soon or late, the assiduity of Cleofiles would traverse his designs. He formed a scheme

to set him against her, and one day accosted him, saying, that this lover, worthy of better fate, abandoned himself entirely to grief and melancholy, and violently reflected upon the unkind behaviour of his mistress. "I am not known to you," said "Bastile; but your physiognomy interests me in your favour. Suffer a stranger to partake of your unhappiness. You adore Laïs; and that perfidious woman, in contempt of her oaths and of your favours, thirsts after another. Achilles is the object of her perfidious flame; she does not conceal it; and you are the only person that is ignorant of her infidelity."

At this conversation, Cleofiles flew in a passion. "False, treacherous woman!" said he, "it was not then enough to oppress me by indifference. You love another; but you shall not long enjoy the fruit of your infidelity; and my unworthy rival—"

That



That moment he saw Achilles pass. He accosted him with an angry and haughty air. Achilles received him with contempt. Cleofiles immediately drew his sword; but death was the reward of his rashness. He died, pronouncing the name of his ungrateful mistress.

LAIS sometimes reproached herself for her infidelity, and for the death of Cleofiles. But pleasures, daily increasing, soon effaced from her mind the image of this unfortunate lover.

STILL Laïs enjoyed the fortune he had given her; which was the only object that awakened in her heart some remorse, and some idea of Cleofiles. Rich and extravagant lovers, it is for your instruction I write. Your mistresses are not like Laïs, either in beauty or in virtue. Let the example of Cleofiles teach you, that these charming women, whom you embellish and enrich

with your spoils, esteem it an art, and almost a perfection, to be ungrateful.

ACHILLES vied with Cleofiles in presents as in love. He went every day to see Laïs, and always made himself welcome by some new gift: — It was on him she made her essays; and studied the art of inflaming hearts, and of deceiving them. Gestures, sighs, tender looks, half words, all were put in practice; but this study is painful, and causes much disquiet. In short, Laïs began to be tired of a work that required so much attention and constraint; when the Spartans, from some old quarrel, declared war against the Corinthians. . She hoped the heat of combat would take from her arms her insipid lover, and that he would fly to the field, whither both glory and avarice called him.

SHE did not hope in vain; for, in effect, the command of the Corinthian army was given to Achilles, as he had all the qualifications

eations of an hero, who laboured both for his own private fortune and for the glory of his country.

BEFORE his departure, he took his leave of Laïs, and mingled real tears to the artificial ones of his mistress. Her dissembled grief exhaled itself in sighs. She tore her cloaths, pulled her hair, and then beat her breast. Paint finished her with a paleness approaching to nature. She affected a dismal and melancholy air; and, during eight days before his departure, nothing was heard from her mouth but sighs. He was touched with this behaviour, and partook of her despair.

“A HORRID necessity,” said he, “obliges me to quit what I adore. Honour commands; it is as absolute as cruel, and will be obeyed; but my love will follow me wherever I go. The sound of arms will not extinguish its voice; it will  
G 6 “even



“ even change into courage. Yes, I will  
“ expose myself to danger, to please you,  
“ and to merit your esteem. That of all  
“ Greece and of the universe is nothing :  
“ yours alone is what I covet. I will ga-  
“ ther laurels, only for the sake of crowning  
“ you with them. What pleasure will it  
“ be to return triumphant to your arms !  
“ But by how long absence must so charm-  
“ ing a return be purchased !—You sigh,  
“ dear Laïs ! Alas ! tears drown my  
“ face. Let us not indulge our passions !  
“ It will be impossible for me to quit you.—  
“ Laïs, dear Laïs, dry up your tears ! —  
“ Adieu ! — May I soon return to wipe  
“ them up myself !” He left her sighing ;  
and freed her from a farce, she had much  
difficulty to carry on to the end.

THE jealous warrior charged Bastile to  
watch over the conduct of his mistress, and  
to give him an account of all her actions.  
This was furnishing Laïs with the means of  
deceiving

deceiving him more effectually, and of never being himself undeceived.

BASTILE informed her of the commission with which he was charged; and told her she might depend upon his fidelity, and procure to herself all the pleasures that libertinism might offer, without fear of any information from him, that might cause a misunderstanding betwixt him and her jealous lover. He recommended to her at the same time, to avoid clamour, •left report, less deceitful than him, should reach the ears of Achilles. She doubted not his sincerity, and followed his advice.

From the day of the departure of Achilles, her house became a splendid court, where a concourse of young noblemen came to contend for the regards of their sovereign. At her levee, these gallants assembled in her apartment, and her toilette became their work; one adjusted a lock of  
hair,

hair, which Laïs had on purpose displaced. Another interlaced in her hair diamonds, which he himself had bought, and wanted to give her without her being sensible of it. A third disordered a pleat in her gown, that he might have the pleasure of putting it in its right form.

IN short, every one had the appearance of being very busy, without having any thing to do. Those that could not work, for want of employ, amused her with stories that happened the day before; but they told them with that ease which none but men of taste and education can arrive at; and embellished them with cruel pleasant-ries, in regard to the unhappy victims, whose misfortunes served to divert them.

LAÏS heard all with that air of indifference which characterizes the great; and seemed not to condescend to lend her attention to the pleasures her amiable story-tellers procured her.

ONE



ONE of these noblemen, named Damon, who had that cadaverous aspect, that empty self-sufficiency, which our present race of fribbles seem to boast of, and which, by transmigration, may have descended inviolate to some of them, related to her one day the following narrative:

“ You have heard talk,” said he, “ of  
“ Altomenes the Spartan, lately arrived at  
“ Corinth. He is now dead. He had a  
“ tender heart; and if I had folly enough  
“ to write a romance, I would make him  
“ my hero and my model. His declarations  
“ of love were made only by languishing  
“ looks and affected sighs. In a word, he  
“ discovered his passion in a manner strictly  
“ sentimental. His love arose not from  
“ caprice; and when he gave his faith to a  
“ woman, he gave it her for ever.

“ ARRIVING at Corinth, he soon saw the  
“ actress Aricia; who, you know, is a great  
“ beauty,

" beauty, and not particularly remarkable  
 " for cruelty. To see her and to love her  
 " was to him one and the same thing. He  
 " languished, nevertheless, some time, be-  
 " fore he declared his love; and was weak  
 " enough to bear for near a fortnight the  
 " anxiety of his tenderness in silence. At  
 " last he made an effort, and opened his  
 " heart to the object of his love and that  
 " of the public. He described to her, in  
 " passionate terms, the most respectful and  
 " most constant flame. Why was not I  
 " present at this declaration? How heartily  
 " should I have laughed, to have seen our  
 " lover on his knees, adoring a beauty who  
 " does not even respect herself! for you  
 " know our actresses. — But Altomenes was  
 " a Spartan, and unacquainted with the  
 " manner of living of these heroines; for  
 " at Sparta they are ignorant of the very  
 " name of a theatre; and an actor is a title  
 " which would there be of very little ser-  
 " vice to its possessor.

" Thus

" Thus Altomenes thought he was in  
 " love with a woman as virtuous as she was  
 " handsome. The cunning actresses affected  
 " to be sentimental, and practised with him  
 " the tender parts she was to play upon  
 " the stage. Sighs, flames, oaths, and the  
 " whole artillery of amorous trifles, were  
 " diligently exerted. The good Altomenes  
 " grew daily more passionate, and scarce  
 " permitted himself the least glimmering  
 " of hopes.

" ONE of my friends, who knew and  
 " esteemed him, I know not for what reason  
 " took it into his head to give him some  
 " advice. — You burn, said he, or rather  
 " perish, for a woman, whom I dare not call  
 " by her proper name, for fear of affront-  
 " ing you. Give me leave, however, to in-  
 " form you, that you may with greater pro-  
 " bability expect to meet with generosity  
 " in a merchant, humanity in a tax-gatherer,  
 " since-



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“ sincerity in a priest, or honesty in a law-  
 “ yer, than virtue in an actress. Be prudent,  
 “ Altomenes; look narrowly into the con-  
 “ duct of your mistress; and you will find,  
 “ as a reward for the torments you endure,  
 “ that she grants to the first comer, and  
 “ even offers to them, the favours she so  
 “ strenuously refuses to you.

“ ALTOMENES could not hear this dis-  
 “ course without the utmost indignation.  
 “ The imaginary insult offered to his mis-  
 “ tress was an injury done to himself. He  
 “ drew his sword, and killed his friend, to  
 “ teach him that the designs of a fool, who  
 “ is determined to ruin himself, ought never  
 “ to be opposed.

“ ALTOMENES triumphantly flew to his  
 “ mistress, to acquaint her both with the af-  
 “ front he had received and his revenge.  
 “ But what a droll scene! He saw the fair  
 “ heroine of the theatre encircled by fix  
 “ lovers,

“ lovers, who were caressing her at leisure,  
“ whilst she diverted them by repeating  
“ pleasant stories of the tenderness of her  
“ ridiculous Spartan.

“ He was astonished, and could scarce  
“ believe his eyes. The actress, who had  
“ nothing more to expect from a man she  
“ had near ruined, and who saw herself dis-  
“ covered, did not let slip the opportunity  
“ of diverting herself at the expence of the  
“ hero of her love. — Come, said she, here  
“ are six of my lovers; you will make the  
“ seventh. I know not whether it be through  
“ superstition or through instinct; but I am  
“ particularly fond of an odd number.

“ This compliment exasperated Alto-  
“ menes to such a degree, that he was not  
“ able to vent his fury. He went out, dis-  
“ tracted with rage, and uttering nothing  
“ but exclamations of despair; and to finish  
“ my story in two words (for I must either  
“ laugh

“ laugh or burst) he run his sword through  
 “ his own body, and died a worthy victim  
 “ of his folly.

“ LITTLE Aricia was the first to spread  
 “ the report of his death. It was too much  
 “ for her honour to be concealed; and it is  
 “ not the happiness of every woman to boast  
 “ that her charming eyes have caused a man  
 “ to die with love and despair.”

SUCH were the pleasant digressions with which the admirers of Laïs decorated her toilette. Yet, neither the pleasures that occupied her, nor the splendor that environed her, could make her entirely forget Achilles. She found it necessary to remember him, if it was only to continue her illusion with some appearance of decency. Laïs found she must write to him. The indolent fair-one resolved upon it. In short, she had to write to a hero, and it was necessary it should be in an heroic style.

BUT



BUT it would have been undervaluing herself to take pen in hand, and to put her imagination to the rack to describe sentiments to which she was quite a stranger. She ordered, therefore, one of her lovers, who was a bel-esprit, or at least was desirous of being thought such, and who had already wrote several tragedies, to compose her an epistle, which should be both sentimental and pathetic. She condescended to assist in it herself; and they could not refrain laughing more than once when they talked to Achilles of the tears his absence caused Laïs to shed. The letter they sent him was as follows:

“ You are in a camp, dear Achilles,  
 “ where a thousand objects occupy your  
 “ heart and mind, each violently pressing  
 “ upon you to efface the image of the un-  
 “ happy Laïs. Glory is my rival. That  
 “ name alone makes me tremble, and ren-  
 “ ders

“ders it triumphant over my weak charms.  
“That alone reigns in your heart ; that  
“alone gives you laws ; and its fire is too  
“violent not to have extinguished that of  
“love. The dangers you seek, the success  
“with which heaven crowns your labours,  
“are only present to your imagination.  
“Can you be moved by my tears, when your  
“courage is employed in nothing but shed-  
“ding of blood ? can my sighs be heard,  
“amidst the sound of arms, and the shouts  
“of victory, which proclaim your martial  
“deeds ? Alas ! condescend for a moment  
“to suspend your attention, and give ear  
“to the complaints of a distracted lover,  
“whose sorrow and alarms are her whole  
“employment. Think that, whilst you fly to  
“glory, her fruitless sighs follow you and  
“would stop your course. Consider, that  
“each danger to which you expose your  
“life is the stab of a dagger, with which  
“you wound her unfortunate heart. Alas !  
“you hear me not ; and victory, which  
“hurries

"hurries you on, renders you deaf to my  
 "cries. — You fly to death! — Ah! cruel  
 "man, stop — I tremble — Each peril  
 "that threatens your life is to me a real  
 "death; and all those darts, whose fatal  
 "venom your courage (or some god who  
 "watches over you) averts, recoil on this  
 "heart you take a pleasure in tormenting.  
 "The more your serene countenance beholds  
 "danger with intrepidity, the more I shudder  
 "with horror. Alas! cruel man, to whom  
 "shall I have recourse, when the future fe-  
 "licity of your own life, when the care of  
 "that of your lover, cannot stop you?  
 "Shall it be to the gods? Alas! can they  
 "see that glory without being dazzled, and  
 "becoming jealous? O Mars, powerful god  
 "of arms, guard my lover. Watch over  
 "thy perfect image! Cupid, suffer no other  
 "darts than thine to pierce his heart!  
 "Gods, are ye as inflexible as he himself?  
 "Alas! all are deaf to my cries!—Cruel  
 "lover!



"lover! dear Achilles! — I tremble — I  
"die.—"

LAIS took pleasure in writing to him letters upon this plan. The answers were not less pathetic, but they were more sincere. Achilles always mixed with them some new recital of his exploits. He informed her of the most trifling situation of the army; and the accounts he gave to his mistress were more exact than those he sent to the republic.

THE house of Laïs became a public place, where every one repaired to hear news of the army, because they had it from the first hand. Thus a courtesan in some measure became of consequence in the state. She sometimes diverted herself in hearing the conjectures of those news-tellers, who think themselves persons of consequence, for having long expatiated upon the past and future events, and for having

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murmured

murmured indiscriminately against all the chiefs of the republic. But, whenever their tedious conversation began to fatigue her, she with dexterity disengaged herself from them, and kept company with those young lords who never made any but amorous conquests, and who knew no other interest of state than their pleasures. It was with these amiable inconstants she parted her hours betwixt the toilette, the public shews, festivities, and play. Her heart wantoned with pleasure from lover to lover. Sometimes she listened to the flattering tale of one; sometimes she threw an inflamed look at another. All were rivals, and yet all were friends; and those lords, accustomed equally to meet with infidelities and to commit them, felt no indignation against themselves, nor against Laïs.

SHE would not however devote her moments entirely to pleasure; and amongst the vices that reigned in her heart (if the

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concern

concern we shew for our own particular felicity may be called a vice) she felt in her heart some glowing sparks of virtue and magnanimity, which she with chearfulness cherished. Generosity with her became a passion, for she was extreme in every thing. A striking occasion soon furnished her with the opportunity of satisfying it, in a manner the most glorious.

DARIUS the tyrant had been just dethroned. His fall astonished the world, and justified heaven. This prince, as unhappy as he was cruel, saw himself driven from his state by his own subjects. He could not find an asylum in the place where he gave laws, and which he filled with the terror of his name. Laïs was informed he had retired to Corinth; and that he was known by some Syracusans, whose commercial connexions had accidentally called them into that city.

WHO



Who could credit the situation of a monarch, formerly so powerful and so terrible, to be so unhappy? Poverty obliged him to assemble some children, to whom he officiated as a school-master; a memorable example of the fickleness of fortune! This tyrant, who had made the universe tremble under an iron sceptre, who with one single look annihilated the object of his anger, now shut up in the obscurity of a school, with a rod in his hand for a sceptre, could scarce be respected by a troop of children.

As soon as it was known, all the Syracusans ran to his house, or rather to his cott. They tore him out; and he soon became the sport of their cruelty. They were already prepared to stone him to death in the public market, when a happy chance (or perhaps the genii who deigned to watch

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over the life of this unfortunate prince) conducted Laïs to the place of his punishment. She saw a man, whom a riotous populace oppressed with blows and injuries. She asked who it was, "It is the tyrant of Syracuse," answered the enraged multitude with unanimous voice. "You will see him in an instant put to the death his crimes have drawn on him."

LAIS was in her litter: she put her head to the window; and after a short harangue made to the people on the respect due to kings, the success of which she owed more to her charms than her eloquence, she perceived the rage of the mutineers grew calmer; and that a single look of a woman had been more powerful than would have been either the threats of magistrates or the appearance of punishment. She brought the people to be submissive to her allurements.

I

SHE

SHE made the unhappy Darius mount in her litter. He was so confounded with her goodness, and the ignominies he had just been exposed to, that the anxiety of his spirits would not permit him even to look in the face of Laïs. This prince kept his eyes cast down, and remained in profound silence. She even thought she remarked that her favours oppressed him; and that he was displeased, that they would force him to a grateful acknowledgment, a virtue unknown to tyrants, sometimes forgot in the courts of better kings. They at last arrived at her house, without speaking to each other. She conducted him to his apartment. He followed her like a lion, who stretches himself with roaring to the hand that stroaks him.

LAÏS at last thought it time to break silence. "Condescend, prince," said she, "con-  
"descend to accept my favours, and reign

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"with



“with me.” This name of prince, this offer of a sort of empire, caused a confusion both in his heart and eyes, of which he was not master. Laïs easily read in them the pleasure which the hopes of commanding inspired, the only one that tyrants feel, and the horror that the remembrance of all his disgrace caused him.

“ALAS!” replied he, with a confused air, “you alone have pity on an unhappy  
“and unfortunate prince, as much torment-  
“ed by the remorse of his crimes past, as by  
“the situation of the rigours with which fate  
“oppresses him on every side. I must open  
“my very soul to you.—Your goodness  
“justly merits that confidence.—I possibly  
“speak to you with too much haughtiness;  
“but excuse that incivility, which proceeds  
“from a remembrance of my past glory.  
“Accustomed to express myself no other-  
“wise than as an absolute monarch; sup-  
“plication is to me a strange and unknown  
“language.

“ language. I was a tyrant ; the universe,  
“ filled with my cruelties, and even yet  
“ smothering with the blood that I unjustly  
“ shed, would contradict me, if I should at-  
“ tempt to hide my crimes from you. I do  
“ not seek to palliate them; I seek rather to  
“ merit your favour by a confession, which  
“ is more mortifying to my heart than even  
“ the dreadful fall from my throne.

“ At the head of a vast empire, I thought  
“ myself adored, when I was only feared. I  
“ flattered myself that I inspired respect,  
“ when I only inspired horror. I thought  
“ all men were born for my happiness, and  
“ I sought it in their misery. All were sa-  
“ crificed to my pleasures ; my throne was  
“ overwhelmed with blood and tears ; and  
“ my barbarity bathed therein with com-  
“ placency. But my felicity was but of  
“ short duration ; and I found the period of  
“ it and the punishment on the throne it-  
“ self.

“ REMORSE made me acknowledge the  
“ gods, and disquiet made me dread men.  
“ Each of my subjects feared me only, - but  
“ I feared them all. I thought to deliver  
“ myself from fear, by augmenting the  
“ guard who watched for my safety ; but  
“ it only encreased my troubles. My guards  
“ and my friends became the objects of my  
“ terrors and of my suspicions. I scarce durst  
“ trust myself. I saw nothing but daggers  
“ and poison around me. The acts I com-  
“ mitted against the unhappy victims re-  
“ coiled upon my own head. I thought to  
“ appease, or at least to weary, the venge-  
“ ance of the gods, by new offences. Such  
“ hopes were worthy of a tyrant, and were  
“ followed by an effect they deserved.

“ My subjects conspired in concert against  
“ me. I saw them break open the gates of  
“ my palace, and penetrate even to my  
“ apartment. I heard the shouts by which  
“ they



“ they excited themselves to kill me. I es-  
 “ caped, alone and disguised, by a door  
 “ known to none but myself; for the work-  
 “ men that made it received death as a re-  
 “ ward for their services. I ran to the pa-  
 “ lace of Niocles, the only one of my cour-  
 “ tiers who had enjoyed constant favours  
 “ under my reign. I had too well loved the  
 “ perfidious man, not for him to resemble  
 “ me. He looked at me with contempt and  
 “ cruelty,

“ You at last then know yourself, despi-  
 “ cable tyrant!” said he. “ Be gone; fly far  
 “ from me. You have taught me ingratitude;  
 “ and I glory in making use of it to the ge-  
 “ neral enemy of mankind. Flatter not  
 “ yourself that my house shall serve you for  
 “ protection; it is payment sufficient for  
 “ your past favours, that I do not abandon  
 “ you to the fury of the populace, justly  
 “ revolted against you. Throw yourself into  
 “ that skiff, which is at the bottom of the

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“ wall

“ wall of my palace. To deliver you to the  
“ mercy of your unhappy fate, is all I can  
“ do for you ; and, perhaps, that is too  
“ much.

“ I ACCEPTED with horror this dreadful  
“ alternative. I threw myself with precipi-  
“ tation into the skiff, and left to the waves  
“ the care of my destiny. This perfidious  
“ element was less so than men. The winds  
“ conducted me to Corinth. You know the  
“ rest of my misfortune. You alone have  
“ condescended to lend me an assisting hand  
“ in the abyss of ignominy and misery where-  
“ in I was plunged. Nevertheless (for I  
“ would open to you the very closest re-  
“ cesses of my heart) would you believe it,  
“ that ambition tortures me even in the very  
“ bosom of indigence? The gods have left  
“ it me, no doubt, to be my executioner.  
“ Yes, from the lowest of my obscurity, I  
“ raise my greedy looks towards the throne.  
“ What do I say? A foolish hope sometimes  
“ animates

“ animates my desires.—I blush at it before  
“ you ; and I well feel that ignominy and  
“ misery will be hereafter my portion, and  
“ that my conscience will add the punish-  
“ ment of having deserved it.”

WHEN he had finished this confession, Laïs endeavoured to encourage him against the remorse of his conscience, by telling him that remorse was the virtue of criminals. She promised never to abandon him. She had him conducted to a country house, which Cleofiles had given her, where he endeavoured to efface, in the bosom of repose, the importunate remembrance of his misfortunes and of his crimes: Thus Laïs tasted the generous and satisfactory pleasure, both of succouring the unfortunate, and of numbering a king in the rank of her creatures. She rendered this justice to virtue, that love has no felicity so perfect as the pleasure of constituting the happiness of mankind.



LAIS was employed in procuring a decent appointment for the tyrant of Syracuse, when she was informed of the death of Achilles. He was a gallant and able officer; and Laïs, as well as all Greece, would have looked upon him as an hero, if his courage had had any other principle than that of avarice. The soldiers that fought under him (a populace whose fight is easily deceived) believed, and made all Greece believe, he received a wound in fighting at their head, and in animating them by his example.

BUT the history of his death, of which Laïs was better informed, was less glorious than what the error of the soldiers made it. Achilles died as a miser, not as a hero. In the time of the battle, he slipped from the crowd; and, putting himself at the head of a few of his friends, he advanced to the enemies camp, which he found unguarded, and

and full of baggage. He began to plunder the tents which seemed best filled with riches; whilst his soldiers, who thought they saw him fighting at their head, performed prodigies of valour. How does the presence of a general operate on the minds of the people! It is sufficient, when they have placed in him their confidence, that they imagine they see him partake of their perils, to make a troop of cowards become an army of heroes. In short, the Corinthians charged their enemies with such fury, that they were obliged to seek their safety in flight, and to return to their camp.

SOME soldiers found Achilles in their tent, who was endeavouring to save them the trouble of carrying away what belonged to them. One of them struck him a blow on the head with a great club, and left him stretched on the spot. His friends carried him to the camp of the victors, and said they found him expiring on a heap of dead bodies.

THE

THE soldier, as zealous of his general's honour as of his own, was not incredulous. He soon told the story in all Greece, as he had heard it; and the name of Achilles was never pronounced in Corinth, but with transports of admiration and acknowledgments, as that of a hero who had sacrificed himself for the safety of his country. It is thus many men receive, as a punishment for the most scandalous actions, the reward of the greatest exploits!

ACHILLES lived two days; and enjoyed, before he expired, all the honours of his death and of his victory. Love disposed of his last moments; and he wrote with his own hand this letter, which Laïs could not read without shedding some tears, nor without reproaching herself for her perfidious indifference to a man who esteemed her so sincerely. This is the substance of the letter she received from him:

"I DIE,



“ I DIE, dear Laïs ; I die, crowned with  
“ glory, and regretted by my country ; but  
“ I die far from you ; that is my torment.  
“ This thought alone is capable of causing  
“ my death. Ah ! how sweet would it have  
“ been, had it seized me in thy arms, if I  
“ could have died in thy bosom ; but the  
“ immortal gods would have been jealous  
“ of so glorious an exit, and have grieved  
“ at their immortality. They caused me to  
“ meet death distant from those eyes where-  
“ in consisted all my felicity ; but let their  
“ power and cruelty be what it will, they  
“ cannot extinguish a love which they have  
“ rendered unhappy. It conveys to you  
“ my expiring soul, ready to quit this frail  
“ body ; it is to you it flies, and my last sigh  
“ is a sigh of tenderness. I feel my strength  
“ decline ; a thick mist deprives me of light.  
“ Adieu, dear Laïs ; adieu, for ever. Pre-  
“ serve some small remembrance of a lover  
“ the most faithful and the most sincere.  
“ Ah ! Laïs—Laïs—I die—”

LAÏS

Lais could not read this letter without conceiving a certain horror for her perfidy towards a man who had so truly adored her. Remorse was strong enough to make her soul balance between vice and virtue, and inspire her with a design of quitting a condition of life, which put both honour and honesty to the blush. But the love of pleasure, and without doubt of vice, had taken too deep root in her heart. A weak reflexion, a transient remorse, were not sufficient to eradicate them; and some days after the death of Achilles, a new lover made her forget him she had just lost.

CLEOSTENES was his name. He was a man equally renowned for his opulence and his nobility. The sophists had possessed themselves of his youth, and had filled his head with political chimeras. Cleostenes had a quick and penetrating genius; he with eagerness learned their systems; he was

was himself soon able to make new ones, and put all in disorder by his zeal for the state. Let an obscure man, without credit, murmur at the order of things, and strive to change the face of empire; his murmurs proceed from too low an object to be heard. But when a powerful and rich man is once susceptible of the passion of novelty, woe be to the empire that does not coincide with his designs!

THERE never passed many months without Cleostenes proposing some new forms of government; and his opinions always found partizans; but when they did not offer themselves to him he bought them; and the murmurs of these wicked citizens were heard, with interested voice, in the public places, exclaiming against the reigning laws of the republic, and loudly calling for new ones. — How different this from the present stability of political systems!

Such



SUCH was the lover Lai's now chose—She might, it is true, have fixed on some young warrior, whom she might have ruined when with her, and have deceived when his duty called him to the army. She might have taken these measures; and a thousand officers solicited the honour of being her's; but her temper, tranquil and averse to tumult, kept her from them, and perhaps kept them for her. She must have seen every moment blood fall around her, and have given her heart to him that had sacrificed his rival. These ideas made her tremble; and she was not possessed of the courage, or rather the proud ferocity, of those courtesans, who love to wade in the blood of their lovers, and see them without remorse murder one another, provided the story is but made public, and that it is reported through the town, that Cleon and Aristas fought to please the charming eyes of Celimena. Cleon received three wounds with a sword, and Aristas remained sole possessor of her divinity.

FOR

"For my part," says Laïs, "such sentiments shock me. Courtesans may esteem my weakness as fear; but I love a weakness which tends to virtue, and detest a courage which is the height of vice."

BESIDES, the military gentlemen despise every thing that opposes their desires, or that does not fully acquiesce in them; whereas Laïs, to whom their intolerant spirit was not agreeable, had preserved, under the name of a courtesan, all the severity of a modest woman.

At length, she attached herself to Cleostenes; and the inseparable fatigues of such a servitude were mixed with some pleasures. Cleostenes was a man about fifty, whom a philosophical restraint had kept from the follies of youth, and adorned with the freshness of the prime of life. His features were noble, but rather sedate; his countenance indicated a politician and a statesman; he had wit, but subjected it to  
the

the restriction of prudence; indulging himself in none of those fallies which usually constitute the pleasure of foolish and idle entertainments.

THIS was the only disgust Laïs had to undergo with him. In the place of amorous tales, he unravelled to her political systems, which he was desirous she should comprehend; and which, out of complaisance to him, she in spite of herself comprehended.

ONE day, whilst he was at the feet of his mistress, describing the excess of his love, and fair Laïs was listening to him with tenderness, half real, half dissembled, he stopped a little — “I have it!” cried he, quite transported. Laïs thought this transport had been occasioned by love: but how great was her surprise, when she saw him disengage himself from her arms, where she in vain strove to restrain him!

“QUICK,”



“QUICK,” said he, “a pen, ink, and paper.”—The surprize that Laïs was in, prevented her from giving attention to his demand. He procured them himself, and began to write with so great calmness, that Laïs could not possibly refrain from laughing.

WHEN he had quite finished his writing, she desired to know what pressing affair had interrupted their amorous conference. “My dear Laïs,” said he, “I have been meditating, for eight days and nights past, on a new form of government, which I would give to the republic. One single obstacle opposed my system. I long sought the means of removing it; and at last have found it whilst I was at your feet. Love first inspired me with it, but the disturbance I was in would possibly have made me forget it; that was the cause of my quitting you a moment for the good of my country. Do not be offended if that overbalances you in my heart; you are dearest to me, next to this.”

CLEOSTENES

CLEOSTENES gave Laïs a taste for magistracy, and an inclination she never lost. There are not any lovers so convenient as those of the long robe. Their mistresses have always a liberty of listening to the military gentlemen; and through a respect for the sword, which keeps people in awe, they turn their eyes another way, and not only seem blind, but sometimes really are so; besides, they are neither boisterous nor imperious. In short, Laïs ever had a strenuous inclination for them.

It was this inclination that transported her from the arms of Cleostenes into those of Sophiles, who was a senator distinguished for judging particular causes, which did not require the attention of the whole assembly. He had the reputation of an honest magistrate; and when he pronounced any decree, the credulous people esteemed it as proceeding from the mouth of equity itself.

SOME

SOME time after Laïs had subjected herself to this senator, she saw a stranger enter her apartment, but without doubt an honest man, for he was preceded by some valuable presents. These diminished the surprize that this visit must naturally have caused. "My boldness astonishes you," said the stranger. "I acknowledge that it is not without reason; but your goodness emboldens me; it has always protected oppressed innocence; and it is that itself, which speaks by my mouth. I am an unhappy man, whom unjust plunderers would rob of his fortune. Sophiles is my judge. You can do with him what you please. Can you make a better use of this power than to defend an innocent and unfortunate man?"

SOME hours after she was quit of this visit, she received another of the same sort, though the merits of the cause were quite  
opposite



opposite to the other. He made pretty near the same compliment, and accompanied it with some presents, which greatly embellished his harangue. She dismissed him graciously; and he thought he read in her looks the happy decree, which was to put him in possession of the fortune of his opponent.

LAIS found that these pleaders did not act consistently with common sense, to think her so powerful, and to place their interest with such confidence in her hands. She no ways doubted but she could be able, by the mouth of Sophiles, to pronounce whatever decree she pleased; but what was to be done? to whom ought she to give the cause? The voice of equity affected her heart, and, as it were by inspiration, directed her what part to take.

THERE was in Corinth a counsellor, as able as he was honest. Eugeles was his name,

name. May posterity never forget him! I wish I could engrave it in brass; rather than in an history, which blooms, flowers, and decays, in so short a period of time!

EUGELES had entered heartily into the cause of the pleaders, and knew which side was right. Laïs went to him, and asked him which of the two ought to lose his cause, if it was judged according to the strictness of the law. He soon satisfied her question. She immediately found Sophiles, and spoke to him about the affair of these two pleaders: "What!" said this incorruptible judge to her, "do you think, dear Laïs, I should ever have delivered my sentence without consulting you? You are the sovereign of my sentiments and my actions. To you I abandon my fate, and that of all men who depend on me. It is you who are to regulate their destiny. My lips only serve as instruments of your pleasure; and what decree so ever they  
I "pronounce,

"pronounce, I think sufficiently just, if it pleases you."

LAIS profited of her ascendancy. She knew on which side justice lay. She gave the cause to him that merited it. Thus she prevented her lover from committing injustice, and made him equitable in spite of his efforts to be otherwise.

SHE was on the point of quitting Sophiles, whose assiduity began to become troublesome, when he prevented her himself. He left her for a little courtesan called Eugenia, whose grimaces served instead of charms and beauty. He saw her, and was desperately in love. He confessed his new flame to Laïs, with a trembling heart, dreading the effects of the resentment he expected from her; but endeavoured to excuse himself by telling her, that love was a passion, of which we are not masters. He thought to comfort her by acknowledging



ing that her charms were infinitely above the faint beauty of Eugenia; but that the blindness of his passion had shut his eyes on the merit of a lover worthy of a better return; and had caused him to see perfections in Eugenia, which, without doubt, she was not possessed of. He expected her jealousy would break out into a thousand reproaches, which he was prepared to receive; but he was mistaken. "You are a fool," said Laïs, "to think me jealous. Jealousy supposes love; and I never entertained for you any more than indifference." — "How! traitress!" — He said no more; but went out like a mad man.

ENVY, however, disturbed this perfect indifference, of which Laïs so much boasted. She could not without grief see a moderate beauty, even in the eyes of men, preferred to her. What tears of anger escaped her! She wiped them blushing, and strove to

conceal from herself the jealousy which tormented her.

To dissipate her chagrin, she resolved to attempt the conquest of a lover, who lived under the precepts of an actress at that time reckoned one of the principal beauties of Corinth.

CLEON was the first treasurer of the republic. He was profuse of his tenderness and fortune to Plismania, who was accounted the best actress that ever appeared on the Corinthian stage. Lais had a mind to rob her of her conquest; and this enterprise succeeded. She placed herself, at the theatre, near Cleon. She tempted him, and had the good luck to charm him, in spite of all the efforts Plismania made use of on the stage, rather to enchant her lover than to deserve the applause of the public. As soon as she joined conversation with Cleon, she perceived he applauded his mistress

treasures with less warmth, and lent less attention to her. She persisted; and at last remained sovereign over a heart, the more valuable as it cost her some trouble to conquer. She was soon loaded with presents, which cost the treasurer nothing more than the trouble of obtaining by levying a new tax on the people. The murmurs of her conscience began soon to reproach her with the blood of the unhappy, with which she enriched each trinket that composed her attire, and even seemed to say, "I am the price of the sweat of innocence, oppressed for thy pleasures!" This thought shocked her. The reproaches of the people rendered it still more afflicting. When she walked in the public places, she saw indignation in every countenance. The poor, who saw in the lustre of her equipages the fruits of the necessities of which they had been stripped, looked at her with eyes of anger and envy. Those looks were so many darts, which pierced the heart of



Lais. She had been able to stifle the remorse of virtue ; but who can smother the voice of humanity ?

ANOTHER accident made her renounce not only Cleon, but even all the lovers her beauty might have hereafter gained her. She had retired for some days to a country house of Cleon's, the finest in the Corinthian territories. She there sought for solitude, and the enjoyment of herself, and retired from the murmurs of the people. But all these different efforts were vain and useless. She seemed still to hear them ; and this illusion was as cruel as the reality itself.

ONE day, as she was taking the air about this country house, in the shady walks, which by their prospect inspired an agreeable melancholy, one of the horses that drew her litter wounded himself. She was obliged to quit the carriage. A young lord, who knew her, named Dorileas, whom chance

chance had conducted to this place, saw her embarrassment, and offered her his litter. She got into it; and found her benefactor to be one of the most gallant and most amiable gentlemen, that nature in concert with art was ever capable of forming. He conducted her to his house, which was not far distant. He there lived with an actress he adored, and who had for him, notwithstanding his favours, a passion as lively as sincere. It is a thing hard to believe; but the little probability does not retract from the truth; and the actress Oenonia loved Dorileas as much as she was by him beloved.

LAI S could not conceive this prodigy. She knew too well the sentiments and the manner of thinking common to actresses. She therefore attempted the conquest of Dorileas, without fearing the effects of the jealousy of Oenonia. She could have sworn her love was nothing but that of a courtesan;

fan; that is to say, dissembled; or, at most, a caprice. But this mistake was near costing her her life.

DORILEAS had borne arms from his infancy. He had contracted amongst the officers that easy and commanding air, which a little approaches to pride and insolence, but is always sure to please. His gallantries were agreeably enlivened. He had a noble mien, complexion delicate, eyes lively, and an agreeable shape. Could Laïs forbear to love Cupid himself, who attacked her under the appearance of Mars, that he might be more certain of his attempts? She could not defend herself from him.

HER growing passion induced her easily to comply with Dorileas's intreaties of staying some days at his house. The first moments passed in pleasant conversation and sallies of gallantry, which prepared their hearts for the last efforts of love.



IN short, the amiable Dorileas seemed entirely to forget his actress. He avoided her, and sought every opportunity to be alone with Laïs. He watched her steps, which, by an amorous instinct, led her only to the places where he was present.

ONE day, rising from table, he stole from the importunate company that captivated them, and conducted Laïs to a labyrinth of myrtle, where they wandered some time, having love only for their guide. They arrived at a small bower, which seemed to be a little representation of Cythera. A rivulet that surrounded it formed an island, closed on all sides, which Cupid opened to the Pleasures and Graces only. Beds of moss enamelled with flowers, a cool shade, a clear and serene sky, the murmurs of a rivulet—Would not the most untractable beauty be softened by objects so charming? Laïs was neither wild nor cruel. What an im-

pression must the sight of these beautiful objects make on her senses, especially when enlivened by the presence of a lover!

DORILEAS and Laïs sat down on a little amphitheatre of turf, which the hand of nature, conducted by that of love, had adorned with the most smiling beauties. "Ah! lovely Laïs," cried Dorileas, with a tender sigh, "how charming is this retirement, when your eyes behold the enchantment! How sweet is it to me to forget the universe at your feet! to consecrate to you my very being! Laïs, dear Laïs, I throw myself at your feet; do not reject a heart that adores you. I wish I had a thousand to offer you! At least, it is a heart the most inflamed, and the most faithful, that ever loved." Pronouncing these words, mixed with sighs, he pressed his lips on the hands of Laïs. She heard him with kindness, but with inexpressible disorder. Her eyes devoured the charms

charms of her lover. Her heart, ready to fly away, sprang to unite itself to his.

AT this instant, a woman, with a distracted countenance, appeared at the entrance of the bower. It was the actress Oenonia. Her rage redoubled at seeing her lover at the feet of her rival. She exhaled her reproaches and her fury, by repeating, in a theatrical voice, some tragical verses of Sophocles.

OUR lovers, amazed, looked on her with silence and trembling. But the actress, still imagining herself upon the stage, drew a dagger, and plunged it into the heart of the unhappy Dorileas, exclaiming,

“Receive, perfidious wreath, the fatal stroke  
 “Reserv’d, by righteous fates, for crimes  
 “like thine!”

LAI S would in vain have presented herself to the point of the dagger. It was



not permitted her to prolong, by her death, the days of her lover. The blood of the infidel was not sufficient to quench the jealous thirst of the furious actress. It was necessary to mingle with it that of a rival, still more odious. She had the weapon raised over her, ready to compleat her vengeance, when she was frightened by a noise she heard on the outside of the arbor. She fled, because she found she might be discovered; but, in her flight, she threw the dagger in the bosom of Laïs.

It made but a slight wound; and presently she saw a lion, who made the noise that caused Oenonia to fly, fall upon the actress, and, tearing her to pieces, drag here and there her palpitating limbs. This frightful spectacle had, for an outraged and furious love, charms with which it could not feast enough. Sometimes Laïs fixed her eyes on the bloody carcase of her cruel rival; sometimes on her lover, whom she tried in vain

vain to warm in her arms, and to recal to life.

“ALAS!” cried Dorileas to her, with a dying voice, almost extinct, “I die, dear Laïs; but do not regret my fate. My death is too glorious, since I receive it on your bosom, and your adorable hands will close my eye-lids. Why have I not strength enough left to be sensible of my felicity? Adieu, dear lover; receive my last sighs—love—I die!—”

HE expired immediately; and the soul of Laïs, ready to follow his, was eclipsed, and she fainted; too happy, that this favourable lethargy deprived her of the sight and sentiments of the horror she had just been witness to.

WHILST she was, as it were, annihilated in a sleep resembling death, and possibly deeper than death itself, a charitable hand transported

transported her to an apartment in the house of Dorileas. She regained her senses; and her soul at last recovered the use of sentiment; but it was only to make her sensible of her unhappiness. The next day she quitted a retreat, that presented nothing to her but objects likely to afflict her heart. She retired to a country house of her own, where she took a determined resolution never to engage in the intrigues of a courtesan. That state of life became horrible to her; and she wished rather to have still languished in indigence, than to have ever embraced it.

SHE lived, nevertheless, during some months, in a profound calm, in the midst of plenty. She had taken care to exact from her lovers a considerable fortune, which could not be taken from her. She had in town a house richly furnished; she had several in the country, equally voluptuous and magnificent. It was in one of the most beautiful



beautiful of these palaces that she endeavoured to banish from her mind the image, still too dear, of the unfortunate Dorileas. But she found her love for him more lasting after his death, than in all probability it would have been during his life, had he survived the fatal blow.

LAI is no more a courtesan. We have seen how she behaved when she was such. The reader will permit us nevertheless some slight reflexion on her conduct, and on the maxims of courtesans. All ages resemble one another; and those of our days faithfully represent to us the behaviour of the abandoned Corinthians.

COURTESANS are universally esteemed the most passionate of women; and it is absolutely that opinion which dishonours them, and has stigmatized their state with a blemish they will never be able to efface, and which will always appear unworthy of people

people of reputation. But the world is mistaken, and these artful women do not undeceive them. Nothing is so calm as the heart of a courtesan; or, if they sometimes seem to play with love, it is only to make that little god sensible of his impotency, and to teach him not to attempt conquests above his power. A supreme indifference is their principal sentiment; though indeed they have another, which agrees less with love. It is interest. Yes, interest is their idol passion; and whilst a rich man adores their graces, they make love to his treasure. This is the only charm they seek in a lover. He that is most rich, is to them the most amiable and the most amorous of all mankind.

A COURTESAN may, however, at the first entrance into her career, pay some attention to rank and birth, to lay the foundation of her reputation; but when she is once known, she has regard to nothing but riches.

riches. She above all sticks close to those lords, who, delivered from all importunate directors, make their entry into the world. To make a figure is their only study. They are not content to confine their splendour to their own persons; they will diffuse it to all about them. But it is on their mistresses that they see it reflect with the highest degree of satisfaction.

IN all other respects, that of a courtesan is as painful as it is tiresome. If her lover is an old man, what efforts must she have recourse to, in order to satisfy his desire! the point of pleasure, being blunted in him, must be sharpened afresh; his soul roused from its lethargic state, to be recalled and raised to felicity. Love is the most irksome art, when it is not natural. We must nevertheless allow, that the labour of a courtesan is blended with some pleasure. There is not any more delightful than that of deceiving.



ceiving men; to communicate to them a fire, which outwardly seems to burn them, whilst their hearts are in the coldest state, or at least the most tranquil.

IN short, if the soul of a courtesan is susceptible of love, it never is for him that loads her with benefits. Love ceases to be any more such, when it becomes a duty. The different circumstances of the life of *Lais* have too well convinced us of this truth. She is going herself to experience it in her turn.

WHILST she lived peaceably in her country house, abandoned by *Cleon*, whom she had first quitted, the fortune of this financier suddenly changed its face. He had ruined the state, to enrich his mistresses. It is easy to be liberal of a fortune which does not belong to us. Such a generosity does not require much greatness of soul. *Cleon* pillaged the public treasure with

with which he was intrusted; and this inexhaustible source of riches, in the hands of an honest man, would have defrayed the exigences of the republic, though it was scarce sufficient to answer his extravagances.

THE eyes of the republic were at last open to his thefts; and they heard the cries of the people oppressed with taxes. The effects of Cleon were confiscated for the use of the republic; and this unfortunate criminal was reduced to beg his bread, in a country he had desolated by his extortions. The people, always pitiless in their revenge, looked on his misery, only to increase its rigor, by the most cruel repulses and the most oppressive reproaches.

CLEON, not knowing where to find refuge against his poverty and the fury of an irritated populace, had recourse to the courtesans he had enriched by his thefts; but  
their

their doors were all shut to him, and they repulsed him with the most cruel disdain. Such is the characteristic of these adorable women, to whom inconsiderate men abandon, without reserve, their hearts and fortunes !

At last, the unfortunate Cleon bethought himself of Laïs, and imagined he should find more generosity in her heart than amongst the rest. One day they informed her that a stranger, badly dressed, without attendance, who seemed to seek some servile employ for his subsistence, asked to speak to her. Laïs was generous, and strove to repair, by her bounty towards the unfortunate, the too great condescensions she had made use of towards her lovers. She ordered him to be admitted. It was with difficulty she knew him in the wretched garb which covered him. "You see," said he, casting down his eyes, "a miserable wretch, who blushes as much at his misfortunes,



“ fortunes, as at his crimes! Behold a man  
 “ you once seemed to love, and who ador-  
 “ ed you and loaded you with favours;  
 “ but whom adverse fate has reduced to the  
 “ dismal necessity of imploring your bounty.  
 “ Relations, friends, mistresses, all abandon  
 “ me; and I found less inhumanity in  
 “ the people I had ruined, than amongst  
 “ the ungrateful women on whom I had  
 “ lavished my fortune. It is on their ac-  
 “ count I became culpable; on their ac-  
 “ count I have been punished. To them I  
 “ sacrificed my fortune, and even my vir-  
 “ tue; and all unite to increase my misfor-  
 “ tunes. In short, alone and without re-  
 “ source, I come to throw myself at your  
 “ feet. Will your heart be inflexible?  
 “ No, I think I know it; and, without that  
 “ knowledge to embolden me, I should have  
 “ died with despair.”

LAIS raised him, and strove to save him  
 the pain that she knew he would suffer,  
 at

at receiving her favours, from that generous pride, which supports the miserable only to make them more sensible of their meanness and adversity.

SHE began, by ordering her domestics to respect him as their master; and discharged an insolent valet, who, in introducing him, had treated him with insult and disdain. Such are these proud slaves, who think themselves as great as those they serve, and despise all who do not proclaim themselves by the same brilliant appearance which distinguishes their masters!

LAIS returned to Cleon half the estate she had received from him. He became an honest man; and without doubt happy, as he coveted nothing more than what Laïs had given him. He even did more; for, as the confiscation of his effects was not sufficient to indemnify the public treasury, he gave to the republic part of his new revenues,

nues, and strove by that means to establish his reputation, and return to virtue.

THE generous Laïs could not avoid admiring this action; and would not let him suffer for his probity. She took care to remit to him, without his knowing from whence it came, as much as he had deprived himself of to enrich the public treasury.

THIS was not the only act of generosity that reflected honour on the life of Laïs, before a premature death terminated its course. Euphemia found in her friend a greatness of soul, and a fidelity, which the various changes of fortune had not altered. Pursued by pitiless creditors, abandoned by her lovers, despised by all the world, she went to seek Laïs. "You live in plenty," said she, "and your friend is fallen into the most shocking indigence. All that poverty has in it most cruel and most shameful (especially falling from a splendid  
4 "state),



“state), ignominy, want, and misery, are  
“become my portion.

“You know my debts had plunged me  
“into difficulties, of which I saw no end. I  
“nevertheless hoped to extricate myself  
“from them, by the assistance of a rich and  
“profuse lover; but the man to whom I  
“had just subjected myself was jealous.  
“His presents had already provided for my  
“necessities; the rest would have followed,  
“if my fatal imprudence had not prevented  
“his prodigality.

“Love had attracted to me a poet and  
“a musician; and love retained them. The  
“poet was a bel-esprit, had a lively and  
“fruitful genius, and celebrated in his  
“verses my charms, and his regard for  
“them; but with expressions sufficient to  
“captivate the most indifferent heart. His  
“form of body exceeded the endowments  
“of his mind; and when he sang the joys  
“of

" of love, you would have thought it had  
" been Cupid, who was praising himself.

" THE musician tuned his harp to the  
" accents of the poet, and maintained his en-  
" thusiasm by the most harmonious sounds.  
" He was not less amiable than his rival.  
" Both of them were partakers of my heart;  
" but this division did not occasion the least  
" jealousy. They were the most convenient  
" lovers I ever knew. They seemed accus-  
" tomed to beauties of a fickle disposition.

" CLEARDUS is the name of my lover the  
" financier. Cleardus was soon apprized of  
" my intrigues. He had often seen the poet  
" and musician come to my house, and was  
" witness of the gracious reception they  
" met with. My jealous lover did not  
" choose to conform to the fashion, by ruin-  
" ing himself for a mistress who lavished  
" his presents on his rivals. He quitted  
" me, after a severe lecture on my infideli-  
" ty, which had little effect upon me.

K

" Lf

" If he had been content to have thun-  
" dered out the most infamous reproaches  
" to me alone, I should easily have pardoned  
" him, and my fate would not have been  
" worthy of pity; but he defamed me  
" through all the town, where I am now  
" looked upon as ——— In short, they  
" scarce honour me with the title of cour-  
" tisan.

" I COULD no longer expect to find any  
" rich and charitable lover, who would have  
" compassion on my condition, and extri-  
" cate me from the labyrinth of debt in  
" which my luxury and ambition had plung-  
" ed me. The cruel Cleardus, not content  
" with taking the bread out of my mouth,  
" endeavoured even to deprive me of the  
" means of getting any. Excuse these mi-  
" nute particulars. They are the language  
" of misery; and, as such, lay claim to  
" your compassion.

" It



"It would be in vain to have recourse  
 "either to the poet or the musician. They  
 "both were supported by my benefactions,  
 "and are at present as much to be pitied  
 "as myself.—Thus genius and merit are  
 "treated in this trifling age! Indigence is  
 "their portion; and Apollo does not enrich  
 "himself more by singing of verses, than  
 "by touching the harp.

"As love, therefore, abandons me from  
 "every quarter, I have recourse to friend-  
 "ship, a passion equally tender, but more  
 "constant, and less capricious. Yes, my  
 "dear Laïs, I implore your assistance. Cast  
 "your eyes upon my misery. I am sure,  
 "the comfort you can afford me will give  
 "you more pleasure in granting it, than I  
 "shall find in receiving it."

LAIS received her with a look, which spoke the benignity of her soul. "I am

“fatisfied, my Euphemia, that you love  
“me, by the confidence you have reposed  
“in me,” returned she to the petitioner,  
who began to promise herself success. “Ne-  
“ver till this day, was I perfectly sensible of  
“your friendship,” continued Laïs. “You  
“assisted me with your counsels when I  
“wanted them; but your reason for grant-  
“ing them might have been interested, that  
“you might have the pleasure of gratify-  
“ing your generosity. You now implore  
“my assistance. It is by this I know my  
“friend. Your expectation shall not be  
“disappointed. It is too flattering to my  
“heart. Come, dear Euphemia, and live  
“with me; partake of my riches. They  
“are the fruit of your counsels. They be-  
“long to you. Gratitude, friendship, and  
“your misfortunes, entitle you to a right  
“over all that I possess. Generosity is my  
“favourite virtue; and heaven, propitious  
“to my wishes, has always furnished me  
“with the most singular opportunities of  
“exercising

“ exercising it. I have succoured the unfor-  
 “ tunate king of Syracuse; and my bene-  
 “ factions have made of a tyrant, as miser-  
 “ able as he was odious, an honest, an  
 “ happy, and a wise man.

“ At present, Cleon is the object of  
 “ my cares. Friendship, dear Euphemia,  
 “ will not be less powerful than the love  
 “ that formerly attached me to Cleon; if  
 “ love can be called such an attachment,  
 “ formed by a kind of avarice, and sup-  
 “ ported by a feeble glimmering of grati-  
 “ tude. Convince me that you merit my  
 “ favours, by assisting me to dispense them. I  
 “ find that esteem and friendship are prefer-  
 “ able to the strongest passion; and I would  
 “ have the world, on seeing us live in a  
 “ perfect union, be convinced it is not  
 “ impossible that some virtue may remain  
 “ even in the heart of a courtesan.”

THESE two friends lived thus in the  
 most perfect harmony. The fund of wealth,



which Laïs enjoyed, was in a manner inexhaustible; and both she and Euphemia possessed hearts susceptible of the tenderest impressions of benevolence. To assist the wretched, was their principal study; and to be miserable, was a sufficient recommendation to their bounty. In a word, no object of distress was deemed unworthy their compassion.

AN accident at this time happened, which gave Laïs an opportunity of rewarding a man, whose services to her had been considerable. — Bastile, her generous protector, had, in defence of a courtesan's reputation, taken away the life of the younger son of a noble family. The fact was notorious. A brother of Thrasymbulus, the person who was slain, and three other senators, were present at his fall. By the laws of honour, the life of Bastile was the only satisfaction; but the peculiar circumstances of this case were such, that the laws of Corinth required

ed a pecuniary mulct. This stifled the resentment of Thrasybulus's relations. Baf-tile was secured; and a fine imposed on him, which more than doubled his slender fortune. His possessions were seized; and himself thrown into the common prison.

THE matter made too great a noise not to reach the ears of Laïs. She enquired into the particulars of the sum for which he was detained; and no sooner was satisfied of this certainty, than she dispatched Euphemia to release him, to the no small mortification of his inexorable judges, who had purposely augmented the usual fine levied in such cases, in order to confine him to perpetual imprisonment.

No sooner was he released, than he hastened to his amiable benefactress, with a soul overflowing with gratitude. He was about to pour out to her the tribute of a glowing heart, enraptured by her unlooked-for mu-

nificence, when she thus prevented him; “Spare your acknowledgments, my worthy thief Bastile. Your services have claimed from me a much higher reward. Accept these talents,” said she, putting at the same time a purse into his hand, “and with them my palace in Corinth. I shall no longer have occasion for it, being determined to end my days with Euphemia, in this beloved retreat.” Confounded with her generosity, Bastile was only able to answer her by the tears of joy and gratitude. — He accepted the talents; but decently declined the palace. — Laïs was peremptory; and the astonished Bastile acquiesced. He spent a few days with the two lovely females, at their country mansion; after which, he departed to the possession of his magnificent palace.

LAÏS and Euphemia passed some time in the most profound tranquillity and bliss, enjoying the supreme satisfaction of making others



others happy. But love was the rock on which Laïs was doomed to split. She could not resist the influence of the stars; and even submitted to it with pleasure. Her tender ideas, were, however, of the romantic kind; and she still preferred the life of a courtesan, though necessity, which once seemed to justify her, could no longer be pleaded in defence of it. In short, the words which the poet puts into the mouth of his heroine, may with the greatest justice be said to be exemplified in the conduct of Laïs:

"How oft, when press'd to marriage;  
"have I said,

"Curse on all laws but those which Love  
"has made!

"Love, free as air, in spite of human ties,  
"Spreads his light wings, and in a moment  
"flies.

"Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded  
"dame,

"August her deed, and sacred be her fame;

"Before true passion all those views remove ;

"Fame, wealth, and honour ! what are you

"to Love ?

"The jealous god, when we profane his

"fires,

"Those restless passions in revenge inspires ;

"And bids them make mistaken mortals

"groan,

"Who seek in Love for aught but Love

"alone.

"Should at my feet the World's great

"Master fall,

"Himself, his Throne, the World, I'd scorn

"them all :

"Not CÆSAR'S EMPRESS would I deign to

"prove ;

"No ; make me MISTRESS to the MAN I

"LOVE !"

THESE, or such as these, were the expressions perpetually in the mouth of Laïs. But the difficulty was, to meet with an ob-

\* Eloïsa to Abelard.

je&

ject worthy of her regard. Opulence was no longer the principal qualification she sought in a lover. Youth, tenderness and honour, had the ascendancy in her choice. Fortune, however, propitious to her desires, threw in her way the man who seemed peculiarly adapted to her inclinations.

CLEONTINE became the object of her new flame. He was a young warrior, who had already gained the greatest esteem by his exploits; and who made himself adored by the females, through his graces and talents. He always loved to an extreme; but he was fickle, and roved incessantly from beauty to beauty. It was at a diversion where music and dancing animated in concert the public joy, that Laïs saw this warrior. To see and to love him, were to her one and the same thing. Her love did not proclaim itself by those slight agitations, which are with difficulty perceived, so little are they expressive of the force of



that noble passion. It took immediate root; and she concluded it had arrived at its last period: but, alas! how great was her mistake!

It was impossible that Cleontine could be insensible to her advances. How infinite was the satisfaction of being beloved by a beautiful woman,

“born to excel and to command!

“As by transcendent beauty to attract

“All eyes, so, by pre-eminence of soul,

“To rule all hearts!”\*

He daily came to offer his adoration to Lais. She repaid his homages with equal assiduity.—An intimacy so strongly connected, one would have thought, must have been eternally inseparable!

THE recluse life had now lost all its charms. The round of pleasures was re-

\* Congreve.

newed,

newed, and parties of diversion perpetually proposed. The rustic villa, which Laïs had selected for her retreat, was too contiguous to Corinth, not to induce them to pay frequent visits to that seat of opulence and festivity. The palace she had bestowed on Bastile was ever open for their reception; and this gallant young gentleman was a constant attendant on their train.

EUPHEMIA, who, as we before observed, was possessed of the most amiable qualifications, became enamoured with the politeness of Bastile. In every excursion, his civilities were particularly directed to her; and seemed to indicate more of the lover than of the gallant. Prudence was, however, a virtue which the occupation of a courtesan had taught her; and though the lovely Bastile had made a complete conquest of her heart, she was able to conceal it even from the penetrating eyes of her lovely female friend.

BASTILE,

BASTILE, through an excess of respect, never dared to enter on the topic of love. A tender sigh, an expressive smile, or a gentle touch of her fair hand, were the only language in which he permitted himself to address her. Euphemia easily perceived the delicacy of his flame; but reserved the declaration of her sentiments till he should more clearly explain himself.

THREE months thus elapsed in a continued succession of splendid joys; and the satisfaction of Cleontine and Laïs was inexpressible. The friendship they saw subsisting between Euphemia and Bastile, was to Laïs a particular source of happiness, of which Cleontine also pretended to partake. But his inconstant temper was fatigued with the charms even of Laïs; and, he now began frequently to form pretences of business of the utmost concern, in order



to obtain the opportunity of a small absence from the loveliest of women.

THE affection of Laïs was far from being diminished. It seemed rather heightened; if love, founded on the tenderest esteem, can admit of an increase. Every hour that passed without her seeing Cleontine, was spent in reflecting on what had detained him from her. She readily believed his excuses of business; till one time he deserted her for near a week, without assigning a cause for a day's absence.

A STROKE so unexpected overwhelmed her with distraction. One while she imagined the unfaithful man had forgot her; again she feared, that he thought her false; and that this wrong idea had prevented him from coming to throw himself at her feet. The night chased the day, but that did not bring her fickle lover. Her inquietudes did not permit her to close her eyes.

SHE

SHE saw him at length enter her apartment with a melancholy and dejected air. She asked him the cause of his sadness, and why he went from her to seek the misfortunes which seemed to oppress him. "Alas!" said he, "I blush to acknowledge my fatal adventure. Christianus, whom you know, and whom all the world esteems a pattern of honesty, owed fifty talents to my father. You are sensible, my duty called me to the army, and that I was obliged to rejoin it in less than a month. I had occasion for these fifty talents, to make the campaign. I went to Christianus, who paid me immediately, with the greatest demonstrations of joy and gratitude. The wicked man kept me to supper; after which he pressed us to amuse ourselves with a game at hazard, of which no doubt he understood the nicest subtleties. I accepted the proposal; and at first we played for trifles. I was enraged with  
" myself;

"myself; and at last I lost my fifty talents;  
"so that I am now obliged to stay at Co-  
"rinth during the war; and either to lose  
"my reputation, or to make a campaign in  
"the most vile and miserable condition."

"Your uneasiness is to me," answered  
Lais, "the most cruel injury. Do you think  
"the tender Lais can see you one moment  
"in this fatal anxiety? Love me; and have  
"not the least concern about what has hap-  
"pened to you. You have lost fifty ta-  
"lents. Here are a hundred at your dis-  
"posal. Your love is the only recompence  
"I expect for this service, which is far from  
"being adequate to my tenderness."

SHE found a pleasure in assisting her  
lover, which encreased her flame: but that  
of Cleontine diminished daily; and this fa-  
tal favour was the æra wherein his coolness  
began. Lais knew his love was turned into  
a constraint; and was sensible that the  
moment



moment it becomes a duty it eclipses itself, and shrinks from the yoke we endeavour to impose on it.

If Laïs had refused Cleontine what his anxiety required, he would have remained in Corinth, and would have forgot glory in the arms of love. Employed only in pleasing her, would he have thought there was a field of battle, which waited to be the theatre of his exploits? The conquest of his lover would have bounded his wishes; but in forcing his love to gratitude, she extinguished it entirely!

“YES, it is my fatal imprudence,” said Laïs to Euphemia, “it is my foolish generosity, which has raised in his heart that  
“perfidious flame, which burns him, and  
“torments me with indignation as well as  
“distraction. If you knew what rival he  
“presumes to prefer to me!—I blush to acknowledge it; and it is with trembling I  
“pronounce

“pronounce her name; it is—Cleanthis!—  
 “that little wretch, whose services I ac-  
 “cepted rather out of compassion than be-  
 “cause I had occasion for them! She lived  
 “with me six months. She came in the ca-  
 “pacity of a servant; but, as I thought I  
 “saw in her a well-disposed heart, and a  
 “mind cultivated somewhat beyond the  
 “common rank of servants, I made her  
 “my confident and my friend.

“Some days ago she desired her discharge,  
 “telling me she had saved money enough  
 “in my service to live in tranquillity, aided  
 “by some talents with which nature had  
 “favoured her. To her request, urged as  
 “it was with the greatest modesty, I cheer-  
 “fully consented. But it was not long be-  
 “fore I heard that she lived in a magnifi-  
 “cent palace, with an equipage equally  
 “gallant and rich.

“This prodigious change of fortune at  
 “first astonished me. Cleanthis is but a  
 “moderate

"moderate beauty; if we may be allowed  
 "to honour her with that appellation.  
 "Which way soever I turned my eyes, I  
 "could not divine what lover could be so  
 "ridiculous as to sacrifice his fortune to  
 "such weak charms. It was but too soon  
 "cleared up; and I learned that the brilli-  
 "ant situation of Cleamthis was owing to the  
 "munificence of the perfidious Cleontine.

"Dear you has said you"

"You, my dear Euphemia, who are so  
 "well acquainted with the various windings  
 "of the human heart, will readily conceive  
 "the fury and desperation of a female, at  
 "being informed of this base infidelity. I  
 "had resolved, indeed, to have concealed  
 "this secret in my breast; and had doomed  
 "it to perpetual silence. I was afraid to dis-  
 "cover the cause even to you. I know that  
 "the regards of friendship ought not to  
 "make us blush; but in short (pardon my  
 "weakness!) I was ashamed to name my  
 "rival.



“rival. Ah!—perfidious Cleontine! un-  
 “grateful Cleanthis!—May the vengeance  
 “of unerring fate be exerted in vindication  
 “of my wrongs!”

Lais, at these words, abruptly quit-  
 ted Euphemia, to abandon herself to  
 despair. After having indulged her pas-  
 sion in a flood of tears, checked by in-  
 numerable sighs, she resolved to send a let-  
 ter to Cleontine. With a hand trembling  
 with rage, she wrote to him as follows:

“AT last, your perfidy is discovered;  
 “and I have happily discovered both the  
 “baseness of your soul, and the dangerous  
 “extent of my error. Is it thus then you  
 “have abused me by oaths, at which you  
 “laughed in your heart?—Horrid treason!  
 “—Barbarous monster!—It is with diffi-  
 “culty I can conceive how you could so  
 “naturally counterfeit those expressions of a  
 “love you did not feel!—With what con-  
 “stancy,

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"stancy, with what art, did you sustain  
 "transports the most lively and most ten-  
 "der! Alas! what pains did you bestow  
 "in vain! So much was not necessary to  
 "seduce a credulous lover, who saw nothing  
 "in your heart but what she desired to see  
 "there! Was there occasion for so much  
 "artifice to deceive me, whom love had  
 "blinded? My tenderness, jointly with thy  
 "perfidy, conspired to betray itself. My  
 "soul, an enemy to deception, or which in-  
 "deed never had the least idea of it, would  
 "have looked upon suspicion as a crime;  
 "and you ungenerously took the advan-  
 "tage of this sincerity, to contrive the  
 "blackest treason, and enjoy the pleasure  
 "of delivering to the most unworthy rival,  
 "a heart I had purchased by so many be-  
 "nefactions, and with love.

"WHAT have I done to you, ungrateful  
 "man, to merit such treatment? or rather  
 "what have I not done, to preserve to myself  
 "the

“ the dominion of your heart? What charm  
 “ retains you with Cleanthis? For what are  
 “ you indebted to her? Was it she who  
 “ kindly repaired your losses? Was it she  
 “ who has bestowed on you a fortune which  
 “ your imprudence had dissipated? What  
 “ tie, what gratitude, attaches you to this  
 “ despicable slave? No, you taste no other  
 “ pleasure in her arms but that of deluding  
 “ my simplicity; and you only love her  
 “ that you may the more effectually con-  
 “ vince me of your detestation for the  
 “ too-tender Laïs. This barbarous plea-  
 “ sure serves you instead of love.—Clean-  
 “ this — Cleontine — Base and perfidious  
 “ wretches, whom I have loaded with bene-  
 “ fits, enjoy my grief! I display it to your  
 “ eyes! My woes will be to you a specta-  
 “ cle of charms; and my sighs will ani-  
 “ mate your amorous transports. But do  
 “ not flatter yourself, vile Cleanthis, with  
 “ the hopes of enjoying long so darling a  
 “ pleasure. If my allurements had not  
 “ power



"power to fix your roving lover, can you  
 "imagine that your feeble charms will  
 "have greater influence over him? No, no;  
 "this heart, which is constant in nothing  
 "but its levity, will soon fly from your  
 "arms to the pursuit of some other object.  
 "You will see him escape from your trans-  
 "ports, and pierce you in flying with the  
 "same darts he has now wounded me.  
 "Happy still! (I confess it with blushes)  
 "inexpressibly happy should I be, if this  
 "capriciousness would restore the dear  
 "youth to my embraces. Yes, dear Cleon-  
 "tine, return to your once-loved Laïs. My  
 "arms are still open to you. What shall I  
 "say? They even seek you. Turn your  
 "eyes; see a miserable woman, made  
 "wretched only by your perfidy, expir-  
 "ing with love and grief. Lend at least  
 "an ear to the sighs, which convey to you  
 "the true situation of a heart that knows  
 "no other sentiment than tenderness and  
 "grief. Abandon a wretch, whose love to  
 "you

“you can proceed from no other principle  
“than gratitude, or perhaps only from the  
“ambition of ravishing from me the con-  
“quest of your soul. Return, dear Cle-  
“ontine, return; my love conjures you to  
“it; but consider, that a love so vehement  
“as mine must have exhausted all its weak-  
“ness, when it can condescend to entrea-  
“ties; and that at last my heart may be  
“excited to take example from yourself.”

THIS letter had scarce any effect upon the mind of Cleontine. Entirely engaged by his new amour, he read the first lines of it without the least change of countenance, and did not even deign to finish it. His duty, however, obliged him to quit Corinth and his mistress, and to repair to his station in the army. He departed; but took care to leave Cleanthis in a state of affluence.

Lais, as much afflicted at his absence as exasperated at the perfidy of her lover,

L

deter-

determined to follow him, and seek death by his side, in endeavouring to save his life. She concealed her design from Euphemia; as she well knew her friend would oppose a resolution to which she intended inflexibly to adhere; imparting it to none but a faithful domestic, whom an unbounded liberality had attached to her, and who became her confidant and companion.

SHE went from her house in the night, disguised in the habit of a man, and arrived undiscovered at the army. She solicited, and obtained, an employ in the troop wherein her lover fought. This disguise, accompanied with a martial air she affected, prevented Cleontine from knowing her. She contracted a friendship with him; which Cleontine repaid by a gratitude as lively as it was sincere. She found a perfect friend in the most perfidious lover. Cleontine still retained his passion for play. Its



Its having been once fatal to him, was enough to create in him a desire to repair his losses, or rather to run into new ones. He played every day, with a constant run of ill-luck. *Lais* was delighted with this opportunity, so favourable to her love, as it furnished her with a thousand occasions of assisting her lover, and of attaching him to her more and more. Her purse was always open to *Cleontine*. She frequently even borrowed large sums, to supply the pressing necessities of this perfidious man.

ONE night, however, happened to be favourable to him. He played deep, and won a very considerable sum. In fact, he entirely cleared the purses of several officers, who in concert formed the detestable plot of assassinating him. The party was deferred till the next day, when *Cleontine* strayed to some distance from the camp, in order to abandon himself more freely to meditation, and amuse himself with the re-

collection of Cleanthis. These ungenerous officers attacked him. He defended himself with the greatest dexterity and courage, and maintained the combat a considerable time, regardless of the superiority of his dastardly antagonists.

LAIS, who chanced to be walking near the place, was drawn to it by the noise and clashing of arms. But what was her surprise when she saw her lover surrounded by cowardly assassins, and ready to sink under their efforts! The first sentiment of an ordinary love, would have been timidity; her's was a courageous fury, which threw her with precipitation into the midst of the combatants. What cannot love effect? She presently dispersed the enemies of Cleontine, who were not less amazed at her valour than at this extraordinary instance of friendship.

“How then!” said he, “too generous  
“friend, have you condescended to expose  
“your

"your life for an unhappy man to whom  
"you are not indebted, and who is obliged  
"to you even for preserving him from ruin?  
"No, a friendship so tender was never  
"known. Even love itself would not go  
"so far."

"You are mistaken," replied Laïs, with  
much emotion. "I am persuaded that Laïs,  
"whom you formerly loved, and who still  
"adores you, would have done just as much  
"as what you reckon so extraordinary an  
"instance of friendship in me."

"WHY do you mention Laïs to me?"  
replied Cleontine very coolly. "Possibly  
"she would have been fool enough to have  
"sacrificed her life for me; but that ser-  
"vice would never have re-kindled a love  
"too well extinguished!"

"WELL then! perfidious man, know  
"this odious Laïs. It is her; yes, it is she



“ herself, who has just preserved you at  
“ the hazard of her life. It is she whom,  
“ by your ingratitude, you punish with that  
“ death, she has sought by prolonging your  
“ days. Cruel man, know me; or, if your  
“ eyes still doubt, think of what I have  
“ just done for you; and judge whether  
“ any other person but Laïs is capable of  
“ it!—Ah! dear lover, tear not yourself  
“ from my arms.—Suffer me at least to  
“ expire at your feet with tenderness and  
“ sorrow.”

CLEONTINE himself was near falling with grief and confusion. He disengaged himself from the intreaties of the tender Laïs; and the same day left the camp, to avoid the pursuits of so heroic a lover, of whom he was so unworthy. He retired into Ionia. Laïs followed him in his flight; but the women of that country, jealous of her beauty, assassinated her on the road.

THEY

THEY pretended to assemble, as she passed, to admire the master-piece of nature and of love; but they made her pay dear for this pretended homage. Six of the most resolute amongst them removed the object of their common jealousy, by piercing the unfortunate Laïs with a dagger in several places.

SHE fell in the arms of her faithful domestic, who had in vain hazarded his life to defend her. "Alas! I die," said she, "return to Euphemia; tell her to divide my fortune with Bastile, the friend whose kind offices have ever been disinterested. — Ah! Cleontine, ungrateful Cleontine, your perfidy is the only object which embitters my death! Had your flame been half as constant as the friendship of Bastile, this unhappy breast would have remained in perfect tranquillity, and never have been exposed to the fatal

L 4

"blows.

“blows of these barbarous females!—But  
“my love was too tender. Even to my ex-  
“piring eyes your adored idea is present.  
“Yes, the thoughts of you distract me. —  
“Euphemia, reproach not the memory of  
“your friend. — Bastile, thou worthiest of  
“men, preserve your esteem for me.—And  
“thou, too-lovely traitor” — She would  
have repeated the name of Cleontine,  
but her lips had no longer the power of  
utterance.

LEONARDUS, the trusty servant who at-  
tended her flight, in vain endeavoured to  
recall her parting spirits. Half frantic for  
her loss, he fell senseless at her feet. The  
murderers, dreading the vengeance of their  
country, retired, leaving the loveliest of wo-  
men to breathe her sorrows to her attendant,  
who was scarce able to support himself.

THE tumult of the runaways had ex-  
cited the curiosity of a rustic, who soon saw



too plainly the cause of their disorder. He found the beauteous Laïs—triumphantly charming, even in death—prostrate on the ground, and breathless.——Leonardus had just recovered strength enough to inform the good old stranger of the miserable fate his mistress had experienced, and to beg his assistance in procuring a litter to remove her. The cottage of Benvolio was at no great distance. Thither were the beauteous remains transported; and to the venerable rustic was the care of her funeral consigned, with a sum of money much more than adequate to the charge.

With as much expedition as possible, Leonardus repaired to the mansion of Euphemia, who had in vain endeavoured to discover the unhappy Laïs.—She was lost in a flood of tears, when the faithful domestic entered her apartment.—He ventured to approach her; when, raising her  
dejected

dejected eyes, "Ah! Leonardus!" said she,  
"whither have you flown from happiness?  
"Speak instantly—where is Laïs? where  
"is my worthiest friend?"

"SHE is on the road to Elysium," returned Leonardus, "and is indebted to the perfidious Cleontine for her journey.—Alas! she is dead! — She is no more! — These eyes beheld her expiring soul! these arms supported her in the last moments of her life!—Her departing voice hung on the deluding traitor, whose infidelity had so fatally plunged her into misery. — Her fortune and possessions of every kind she left to you and Bastile; her tenderest thoughts were Cleontine's!"

EUPHEMIA, who was before disconsolate, began to revive at these last words. "Her fortune and possessions to me and Bastile?"—cried she with an air of surprize, which had not the least resemblance of affliction.—

LEONARDUS

LEONARDUS again repeated the sounds which seemed to have so extraordinary an effect on his new mistress ; and proceeded to inform her of the whole of the adventures they had met with from their first departure. She listened to them with great composure ; till he came to relate the miserable particulars of the death of Laïs. There her spirits failed her ; and all the golden hopes of love and fortune were insufficient to preserve her from a swoon.

THE first business of Euphemia, when she came to herself, was to dispatch the following billet to Bastile, who had taken up his residence entirely at Corinth :

“ If ever the delicacy of a female may  
“ be pardoned for declaring a passion which  
“ swells the soul, Euphemia may justly expect forgiveness.—Yes, Bastile, I love you  
“ to excess.—Fortune now smiles upon me,  
“ Let



“ Let us be happy.—Fly instantly to my  
“ wishes; and disperse the chagrin which  
“ you alone can prevent my feeling at the  
“ loss of our amiable friend.—I cannot ac-  
“ quaint you of the circumstances of her  
“ death.—But Leonardus, who attends you  
“ with this, will inform you of the parti-  
“ culars.—Delay not a moment in comply-  
“ ing with the request of a woman who  
“ adores you.”

THOUGH Bastile had the greatest reason to imagine she entertained some favourable thoughts of him, he had not dared even to think he was beloved by Euphemia. At the receipt of this billet, however, he did not hesitate in obeying her commands.—Placing Leonardus with him in the litter, they hastened to the charming retreat. Bastile was shocked at the account given him of the barbarous murder of Laïs; but his melancholy ideas were soon subsided on his arrival at the palace of Euphemia.

MANY

MANY words would have been useless. In fact, neither of the lovers were very capable of entering into conversation. — Grief for their lost friend, mixed with the highest satisfaction at the prospect of their approaching felicity, agitated their thoughts too violently, for some time, to admit of any discourse. Bastile first broke silence. “How shall I, my dear Euphemia, sufficiently express my sense of the honour you have conferred on me? I will not attempt to describe to you my esteem. Accept my warmest gratitude; and let my future conduct convince you you have not placed your affections unworthily.”

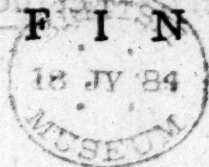
“UNWORTHILY!” cried Euphemia in a tender voice. “No, Bastile, I am too well acquainted with your merits, to doubt your sincerity. Let us confirm our mutual passion, by offering our vows at the altar of Hymen immediately. — Let the priest give  
“ a sanction

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“ a sanction to our love, and crown our  
“ blifs by the holiest rites.”

— BASTILE embraced her with raptures. The next day they repaired to Corinth, where the sacred ceremony was performed amidst crowds of pleased attendants. After a short parade of pomp in that opulent city, they retired to their lovely villa, and passed the remainder of their days in pleasure and tranquillity.—They continued the pension to the monarch of Syracuse whilst he lived, which was not long after the decease of his amiable benefactress.— They rewarded Leonardus with a considerable sum, which secured to him an easy independence.—In short, they pursued the conduct which had obtained Laïs the title of the friend to the distressed; and no one who had ever experienced the bounty of that generous female, escaped the protection of Euphemia and Bastile.

F I N I S.





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